

APRIL, 1958

25¢

LIGUORIAN

.....WHY PRIESTS AND NUNS DON'T MARRY.....

.....CRADLE MARRIAGES.....

.....WHAT PROGRESS TOWARD THE PERFECT CRIME?.....

.....OPPORTUNITY FOR SINGLE MEN.....



THE Liguorian

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of Truth, Justice,
Democracy and Religion,
and to All That
Brings Happiness to
Human Beings*

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THE LIGUORIAN IS INDEXED
IN THE CATHOLIC PERIODICAL INDEX

THE LIGUORIAN

LIGUORI, MO.

What Progress Toward the Perfect Crime?

MATHIAS J. HUBER, C.S.S.R.

IN ITS February, 1958 issue the **READER'S DIGEST** published an article with the title, "What Progress Toward More Effective Birth Control?" The article could much more fittingly have been given the title we have placed at the head of this article: "What Progress Toward the Perfect Crime?"

The article was written by Dr. Abraham Stone, vice-president of the International Planned Parenthood Federation and Medical Director of the Margaret Sanger Research Bureau.

It is our opinion that the **READER'S DIGEST**, by the publication of this article, has lowered its editorial policy to just about the lowest rung on the ladder.

Within a day after the article came to our attention, we received a letter from one of our readers, Mr. Charles Dunlop, of Albany, New York, together with a copy of a letter which he had written to the editor of

The right to report on issues which are subjects of controversy can not be denied to any publication. Such reporting, however, should never fall to the low level of disguised propaganda.

READER'S DIGEST. In his letter to us, Mr. Dunlop remarked: "There is little question, in my mind at least, that this article is calculated to impress the reader with the fact that contraception has been fully accepted, that it is 'the thing to do' and therefore should be embraced without hesitation by those who may be wavering in their attitude. The phenomenal rise in the sale of Kent cigarettes following an article in **READER'S DIGEST** amply testifies to the impact this magazine has on public opinion."

We agree completely with Mr. Dunlop, and it is for the reason he so well presents, that we say that the **READER'S DIGEST** has failed in

its editorial responsibility. This point in particular, as well as other points which we had planned to make in our editorial comment after reading the article, is excellently stated in Mr. Dunlop's letter to the editor of *READER'S DIGEST*; and since, moreover, the expression of opinion comes from a layman, and since, further, we have well-founded doubts that *READER'S DIGEST* will do so, we publish Mr. Dunlop's letter in full. Here it is.

* * *

Mr. DeWitt Wallace, Editor
The *READER'S DIGEST*
Pleasantville, New York
Dear Mr. Wallace:

For as many years as I can remember, the *READER'S DIGEST* has been a most welcome guest in my own home and the home of my parents. I regret that I must exercise the prerogative reserved to any host and ask that your magazine no longer enter my home.

Your treatment of controversial subjects has, in the past, been truthful, largely unbiased and free from propaganda. Never have your articles offended my sensibilities. However, the article in your February issue, "What Progress Toward More Effective Birth Control?" represents a tremendous fall from the traditionally high level of your publication.

This article, purporting to be informative, is in my opinion very thinly disguised propaganda aimed at convincing a large body of unthinking Americans that contraception in itself is finally and completely outside the sphere of moral and ethical con-

sideration. It is not, cannot and never will be such, regardless of how many coats of intellectual varnish are applied to the subject.

In addition to being little more than propaganda, the article is viciously misleading in implying that large scale use of abortion precedes and is alleviated by the use of contraception. Had the author or (and this I regard as unforgivable in a magazine such as yours) your staff troubled to check the facts, I am sure you would have found that large scale abortion follows and in many cases is part and parcel of the spread of contraception. The Japanese government, for example, has legalized and in fact encourages abortion for those who have made "mistakes" and are about to become parents. Your author does not mention — why, I don't know — the one final "contraceptive" measure resorted to by those who fail in their previous attempts. There is always a river, a shallow grave or a shoe box that will mutely receive and dispose of an unwanted bit of humanity.

The cursory reference in the article to "voluntary" sterilization does little to hide the author's *implied* sentiment that there are large groups of people in the world who should be, indeed must be, denied the right of parenthood. Here we have one more example of the increasing trend to engulf the individual in the miasma of state authoritarianism.

Playing outside my door at the moment are three adopted children. Unwanted by their parents, they are

growing up strong and secure in the knowledge that they are very precious to my wife and myself. A lump comes to my throat when I think that they would not be here at all if someone had achieved, to borrow from your article, the "perfection of an ideal contraceptive."

Very truly yours,
Charles W. Dunlop
1133 New Scotland Rd.
Albany 8, New York

* * *

To the publication of the above letter we add these remarks:

In the opening paragraph of his article in *READER'S DIGEST*, Dr. Stone says that nothing *could better exemplify* the broad change in attitude toward birth-control than two photographs hanging on the wall of the Margaret Sanger Research Bureau in New York City. One, taken in 1917, shows Margaret Sanger being sentenced to jail for providing contraceptive information to women in the United States' first birth-control clinic. The other, taken in 1949, shows her receiving an honorary degree from Smith College as a "leader in the world-wide study of population problems and pioneer in the American birth-control movement."

Now that statement, we believe, is an example of what may facetiously be called "deep thinking" by a doctor who is referred to by *READER'S DIGEST* as a distinguished authority. Since when have the members of the faculty or the students of Smith College been recognized as capable of

expressing or reflecting the attitude of the common people of the United States?

We cannot resist the temptation to make a comparison. Would it be fair and honest to say nothing could better exemplify the broad change in attitude toward crime than two newspaper photographs? The one shows Vittorio Scusame being sentenced to prison for murder in 1935. The other photo shows the same Vittorio Scusame, on the occasion of receiving his parole in 1955, accepting a loving-cup from the members of his mob, as a pioneer in organized crime.

Dr. Abraham Stone, in his article in *READER'S DIGEST* says in regard to birth-control: "Much progress has been made. But in every country the basic problem is the same: there is not yet available a contraceptive method sufficiently simple and sufficiently inexpensive for people of all cultures."

This is the kind of thinking and writing which we call unfair and dishonest. The basic problem in regard to birth-control is the problem of morality: is it right or is it wrong? Is it against the law of God or isn't it? But the doctor-author-authority, in his article, simply sweeps that question off the table. In his estimation the big problem is: how can we make better progress toward more effective birth-control? But in the estimation of millions of people, who want to live according to the law of God, the doctor's problem would be more accurately expressed if he were

to ask: "How can we make better progress toward the perfect crime?"

The article by Dr. Stone concludes with the statement that the *crucial* next step, now the concern of so many scientists, in so many parts of the world, is the perfection of an ideal contraceptive.

Again, we cannot refrain from adding a concluding paragraph of our own. Here it is.

When the busy, busy scientists have taken that crucial step successfully and have presented a neurotic waiting world with the perfect contraceptive, will they then turn their scientific minds toward developing the perfect method of abortion — a method that is harmless, acceptable, inexpensive and free from prosecution by the civil law or public opinion? Will they develop the perfect method of being guilty of gluttony in food and alcoholic drink — a method that will allow human beings to eat ten full, delicious meals a day and drink the night away, while they enjoy all the thrills of such eating and drinking without becoming fat, surfeited or drunk? How many years must pass before these scientists will bestow their blessing on wilful murder by offering us a way of making every murder the perfect crime?

We ask anyone who reads these lines, who subscribes to or reads the *READER'S DIGEST*, and who has read the article by Dr. Abraham Stone, to decide for himself whether or not the article offends in the man-

ner outlined above. If you agree that it does, we ask you to join the gentleman from Albany in voicing your protests to the editor of *READER'S DIGEST*. It is not too late.

OUT IN THE OPEN

Some people think that they are doing God a favor when they pray and attend church. They seem to regard it as a sacrifice when they give even a small part of their time to religion. Instead of recognizing their obligation to God as the most important thing in their lives, they treat religion as something having certain merits, but not something utterly and absolutely essential to them. Yet that is exactly what it is.

Religion consists not only of a whole series of truths which we must accept, but a number of duties which we must perform. Church-going is an essential part of religion though not by any means the most important part. Some people who go to church have very little real religion. But, on the other hand, no one can claim to be sincerely religious who does not go to church.

Men must worship God not only in the secret of their hearts, but out in public where they lead their lives. That is why the Church, the true Church, is necessary. It is a group expression of a group dependence on God.

•

ASPIRINS AND SYRUP

Many Americans are trying to turn God into an aspirin tablet and Christianity into a soothing syrup. Christianity offers no capsules for the avoidance of worries and tensions. All true religion involves sacrifice.

The Way

THE LIGUORIAN

An interview with a dead man who is
still being dragged from his tomb.

GALILEO and the DRAGON

THERE is, of course, no such thing as a magic word, just as there is no such thing as a dragon. So let me tell you about the dragon that is slain, daily, by a magic word.

The word is *Galileo*. And the dragon is the *Catholic Church*.

This terrible dragon, that constantly spouts the fire of hell and attacks with the devastating horns of iron dogmas, can always be bested by one who uses the magic word. The moment this ecclesiastical beast begins to overpower its victim with its tremendous weight of evidence, let the poor victim shout, "Galileo," and immediately the monster cringes and slinks away like a mangy mongrel, loved by none but flies and fleas.

Here is the true story of the magic word, *Galileo* . . . straight from the dragon's mouth.

I happen to be a dragon's man myself. You can tell by the clothes I wear: all black, except for a stiff, white collar that is fastened in the back and pinches my Adam's apple in the front. On buses, trains and

JOHN M. KREUZER, C.S.S.R.

street corners, dragon-killers like to joust with men of my ilk. Should they, however, find the opposition too tough, they press the safety valve and whistle out the magic word, *Galileo*. Then, with a happy smile, they lean back and expect me to grovel in the dust, turn over three times, and cry with shame.

But I've developed a technique of my own. It is a type of anti-aircraft defense, calculated to take the hot air out of this over-blown-up magic word. On hearing the word, I too smile happily and say: "Ah, yes. Good, old Galileo! Looked him up the other day. You know, he doesn't like the way his name is being abused. Says that, as a scientist, he has no use for magic. Would you like to hear about our meeting?"

The wielder of the magic word is usually a bit dumbfounded by this time and has let his jaw sag a few degrees so that, before he can reel

it up and speak, I am already on the transmitting end.

I begin to talk.

Yes, I looked up Galileo the other day. Called up the Historical Society to rent a drive-your-own dragon. The model I got was the latest. A swept-wing dragon with a cushion-air ride right into the back streets of history. With push button control it was amazingly simple to direct this power-packed dragon through the freeways of the past and park him neatly on January 1642. There lived Galileo; but he was in pretty bad shape. Still, he wasn't in prison, as I had been led to expect. His deathbed accouterments were decent to the point of refinement. Noting, nevertheless, that he was blind, I said, "So it's true. They did put your eyes out."

"Nonsense," he said. "Can't a man go blind these days without everyone saying that hot pokers were aimed at his eyeballs? No doubt the good Lord blinded me because I saw more than even my telescope could really reveal."

"Ah, the telescope!" I exclaimed. "You certainly left posterity a most useful instrument there."

"Not exactly original," Galileo confessed. "I heard about this optician, Lippershey, a Dutchman who said he could magnify remote objects. So I spent the night computing the laws of refraction. It worked out fine. With my telescope I proved that the moon wasn't like a big, flat, silver dollar, and also that the sun has blotches on its escutcheon."

"Galileo," I began respectfully, "I know that you are a great man. You proved, for instance, that if you dropped Elvis Presley and Kate Smith off the leaning tower of Pisa, Kate would not fall flat twice as fast as Presley, even though she is twice as heavy. Of course no one would want to shove so charming a person as Kate off of anything. You also proved (from your daydreamings during the services at the Cathedral of Pisa) that the tics and tocs of pendulums are as perfectly timed as the Radio City Rockettes. Your discoveries in cycloids, quadratures and infinitesimals have contributed much to science and to my own bewilderment. But I should like to know one thing. Why was it that you, who are the firm friend of Barberini, were condemned by the Catholic Church, just when this fine friend of yours donned the triple tiara and became Pope Urban VIII?"

"It might interest you to know that my friend Urban, realizing that I am not long for this world, has just sent me his apostolic blessing. Furthermore (contrary to some posthumous rumors) I am to be buried not only in consecrated ground but right in the church of Santa Croce in Florence. Urban, it is true, does not want any monument erected over my tomb. But I don't mind. If you have an outdoor monument, birds usually sit on your head; and if it's an indoor monument, in a church like Santa Croce, frolicking bats disturb your whiskers at night."

"Please do not be facetious," I begged. "To me it is most important

to know why dragon-killers go around shouting your name to prove that the Church, to which you belong, not only gave you a raw deal but tried to put hobbles on the feet of science."

Galileo grunted. "It was the Holy Office of the Inquisition that condemned me. Not the Catholic Church."

"You quibble," I said. "The Holy Office of the Inquisition is a part of the Catholic Church."

"Ever hear of an inquest?" asked Galileo.

"Of course," I said. "When my uncle . . ."

"Never mind," said Galileo, cutting me short. "Now look. An inquisition is like an inquest. An inquest investigates special matters, such as sudden deaths. An inquisition investigates special matters such as deadly doctrines. But the verdict of an inquest is not necessarily the final and formal pronouncement of the supreme authority which it represents. Occasionally, as you know, a superior court does not agree with the verdict of an inquest."

"But the inquisition *did* condemn you," I insisted. "And you were right. Any fool knows that the sun doesn't go around the earth but that the earth spins like a top, and goes annually around the sun."

"Can you prove it?" asked Galileo.

"Prove what?" I blurted out in astonishment. "Prove that the earth spins like a top? Are you kidding?"

"Exactly," said Galileo. "You are so sure of it *now*, that you can't even

recall the proofs. Well, in my day people like you are just as sure that the sun swings around the earth. They see the sun coming up in the morning and going down in the evening. As a matter of fact, for a long time to come people will keep right on saying, 'The sun rises,' and 'The sun is setting in a blaze of glory,' even though they know that the sun is actually standing still."

"Please," I said, "the drive-it-yourself dragon that I hitched outside your door is costing me money by the hour. Could you get to the point without too much verbiage?"

"Of course I was right," said Galileo almost as though he were ignoring me. "So was Copernicus. But when they asked me to prove it, I gave the wrong proofs. I hadn't even the sense to look up Kepler's laws. Do you know one of the proofs I offered to explain the daily rotation of the earth on its axis? I told the Inquisitors that it's clear that the earth spins because of the movement of the tides. Naturally they weren't convinced. They weren't so dumb, you know. And soon you'll see how this fellow Newton will come along and prove that the movement of the tides is really due to the influence of the moon. Why, I didn't even know the difference between a meteor and a comet!"

"But still you were right," I persisted.

"Yes, I was right, but I had no right to be right, because my proofs were not right. So what did the In-

quisition do? It did a very sensible thing. It decided that although the theory about the earth spinning around to make the variations of day and night looked good, still (since I hadn't proved it) I had better not go around telling everybody it was a fact."

"In any event it appears as though the Church was out of its field," I observed slyly, quoting from the dragon killers. "Frankly do you think that the Church should have been meddling in these scientific affairs?"

"You talk," smirked Galileo, "like a newly appointed inquisitor who tries to be clever in order to appear wise. Anyone who reads the Holy Bible (which, incidentally, is much read and respected in my day) knows why the Church is interested in this case. For the Bible speaks of the sun coming up and the sun going down. It also relates the fight that Joshua had with the armies of the five kings. He was doing fine but needed a little more light to finish it up. Obviously he couldn't call the Electric Power Company and ask to have the floodlights turned on, because Edison hadn't as yet arrived on the scene. So he called on God. And God stopped the solar process long enough for the Israelites to finish the last quarter and win the game. That was the longest day in the world."

"True," I agreed, "but the Bible does say that the sun stood still. And of course that's all wrong. What really must have happened was that the earth stopped turning. Consequently,

it is being noised about that the Bible made a big mistake. This naturally breeds some doubt about the Bible as a really genuine article."

At this point Galileo's blind eyes looked at me as though I were a smudge on the lens of his telescope.

"Still trying to bait me," he said. "Long ago I pointed out that the Bible was meant to show you how to go to heaven and not how the heavens go. Look. If you are riding in a carriage or even on a dragon and someone in the back says: 'You must be speeding again. Look how fast the trees are going by,' well, what do you say? Do you curl your lip and snarl: 'Don't be stupid! The trees aren't going at all. Even a moron knows that trees are firmly rooted to the ground?' Do you waste your time and say things like that? Of course not. The usual procedure is to waste your time by growling: 'Who's driving this dragon anyway?' What I am saying is that the Bible was made for popular reading, so it was written in a way that the populace could understand. It talks like people talk."

"Galileo," I said, "these last moments of your life are precious; and also I can hear my rented dragon outside stoking its fire and getting up steam to be off. So let us get on quickly. One thing more I should like to know. Since you seem so sensible in your attitude to the Inquisition at the present time, why did it condemn you anyway?"

"As historians will say of me," smiled Galileo, "I am a bold con-

troversialist. Bold to the point of being rash. Which means that I love to argue. And I do push a rather sharp quill. Well, I agreed with the Inquisition and promised not to propound as a fact what in reality was as yet only a theory that I couldn't quite prove. Still, the thing looked so good to me in comparison to the clumsy Ptolemaic system of making the whole heavens swing daily around the earth, that I wrote a little dramatic piece in which I put forth the Copernican system as an undeniable fact. It comes to this: I broke my word. So the Inquisition had a right to take me up on it. Historians will say that I was made prisoner. But, as a matter of fact, I spent only twenty-two days in the buildings of the Inquisition. No bars on the windows. On the contrary, I lived in a handsome and commodious apartment of an official. The rest of the time I lived with

friends, not only comfortably but even luxuriously. You must remember that my friend, Pope Urban VIII, had given me a nice pension which in your day could be called an endowment to science. Many of my best friends are of the clergy. Some of them think as highly as I do of the true solar theory which will soon be proved a fact."

With a sigh I said, "Galileo, you are soon to die. And by our Lady I sincerely hope you go to heaven."

The great scientist smiled. "I, too, rather hope that I shall. You see, I've spent a good deal of time looking in that direction, even though it has been through a telescope. You will do me the favor, I trust, of knocking the crazy notion out of posterity that my name is a magic word capable of killing dragons."

And that is what I've been trying to do.

ADVICE TO ACTORS

It is a difficult task to interpret for a sensitive and exacting public the works of the great masters. Thanks to the resources of your talent, you breathe into the characters that they have created an existence that is transient, of course, but rich in meaning and emotion. You are required to forget your own personality, or rather to lend it in some way to an extraneous transformation, which identifies it sometimes with that of a hero, sometimes with that of a rebel.

But under these successive changes, wherein the spectator loves to recognize himself, the actor continues to be himself, grappling with his own lot, with his daily struggle, productive or disappointing, with his difficulties, his hopes and his suffering. So We wish you to join to the mastery of your means of expression the more important one of spirit and heart. If good and evil are mingled in the characters whom you impersonate, exercise proper discernment and allow only those ideas and feelings to enter into yourselves that will elevate you and all those on whom you exert influence.

Pius XII in *The Pope Speaks*

Problems of Professional People

PROBLEM: May a Catholic lawfully aspire to be a psychiatrist? If so, what norms should he follow in the practice of psychiatry?

SOLUTION: Psychiatry is the art of healing the ailments which people suffer in their soul, and it is just as lawful and commendable for a Catholic to become a psychiatrist as it is for a Catholic to become a physician for the purpose of healing ailments of body. Indeed, the Catholic psychiatrist will find in the teachings of his Church many truths and directives that will help him to be much more successful in his profession than those who do not accept Catholic doctrine. For the teachings of the Catholic Church provide much information about the nature and the operations of the human soul which can guide and enlighten those who are treating persons afflicted with some form of mental or neurotic illness.

Unfortunately, there are many psychiatrists at the present day who are causing harm to their patients because they accept false principles. A psychiatrist of this type can do more harm than a man who attempts to perform a surgical operation without any medical knowledge. For example, there are some psychiatrists who do not believe that God's law must always be obeyed. They do not hesitate to advise patients to commit sins, particularly sins of impurity. They argue that it is harmful for a person to be waging a difficult conflict with temptation, so that the

The Catholic Psychiatrist

best solution is to yield to the sensual urge. This is an utterly immoral and erroneous procedure. It not only involves the transgression of God's law, which is never permitted, but it is an incorrect solution of the patient's difficulty, since it will bring on remorse that will deepen his anxiety and despondency. The first rule for the Catholic psychiatrist is that under no circumstances may he induce a patient to do anything that is contrary to the law of God. He will realize that in the final analysis the best way for a patient to recover peace of soul is to be most exact in obeying God's law, even though it may involve a certain measure of tension and internal struggle.

Many psychiatrists nowadays do not acknowledge that the soul of man is spiritual and immortal; they regard a human being as an animal that is destined to perish with death. Consequently, they are satisfied if they bring a patient to a sense of contentment such as a dog might enjoy. The Catholic psychiatrist knows that the human soul is a spirit directly subject to God which will live forever; consequently, it should be his objective to impress his patients with the conviction that the greatest happiness in life is possessed by those who direct their lives to the service of God with the hope of eternal happiness beyond the grave.

One of the unfortunate features of much of the psychiatric practice of today is its exaggerated emphasis on sex. Some psychiatrists require their patients to tell

them every detail of their sexual experiences throughout their entire lifetime. The Catholic psychiatrist will avoid this harmful and degrading practice. He knows that sex is a very strong factor in human life, but he knows also that other factors are influential, and in treating psychic ailments he will not be continually bringing up recollections of past sexual aberrations that will only serve to disturb the patient still more and may even produce unfortunate results in the sphere of morality.

Above all, the Catholic psychiatrist should ever bear in mind that the grace of God is a factor that must be considered in treating ailments of the human soul. He knows that through prayer a person who is mentally agitated can receive help from God. Moreover, Catholics

can benefit greatly from the sacraments. Often a good confession is the best psychiatric treatment for a Catholic. The Catholic psychiatrist will not hesitate to suggest these supernatural remedies to those who come to him in their distress of soul.

It would indeed be very helpful to society, especially in these days when so many persons are suffering from anxiety and despondency, if there were many good psychiatrists to whom people could go in their troubles with strong assurance of receiving relief. Catholic psychiatrists who adhere to the principles of their faith are best suited to provide such assurance.

Very Rev. Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R.,
S.T.D., LL.D.,
The Catholic University of America

STEWED PARROT

Missionaries visiting their stations in the remote parts of the Bolivian jungle have become accustomed to eating all sorts of unheard of delicacies. But Father Thomas P. Collins of San Francisco is somewhat skeptical about one of the recipes the natives employ, and which he has been trying to digest for fifteen years.

"When travelling the rivers here," he explained, "we are given parrot meat, and since parrots are known for their longevity, you can imagine the state of the meat. If it is not cooked correctly it will be very tough and sinewy. But that rarely happens, for the natives claim their recipe for cooking parrot is to place the parrot and a rock in the same pot and boil, and when the rock is soft, then the parrot is ready to be eaten."

Maryknoll News

ONE TOO MANY

In our church one afternoon I saw a little boy hurrying down the side aisle. He was clutching something in his fist — a coin, which he dropped into the votive light stand. He picked out a candle, lighted it, and knelt down.

I knelt down too, about a yard away. He soon noticed me, but at first kept his eyes fixed on the altar. Soon, however, he leaned over and said in a resentful whisper:

"Pray on your own candle!"

—Father Mathew Record

This is an age-old question with an age-old answer, an answer that can be found by any sincere seeker in his Bible.

Why Priests and Nuns Don't Marry

ONE of the questions that Mike Wallace, noted television interviewer of prominent persons, would like to ask Pope Pius XII on a public program, reads as follows (as quoted in *Pageant*, December, 1957):

"Why is marriage forbidden to priests and nuns? Are procreation and the normal pleasures and rewards of family life irreconcilable with service of God?"

This question is so often asked that it cannot be answered too often. Sometimes it is asked in good faith, with a sincere desire for enlightenment, and with a background of considerable ignorance. We may assume that is the sense in which Mike Wallace would ask it of the Holy Father; his very phrasing of the question — is marriage irreconcilable with service of God? — indicates complete ignorance of what Christ and the Bible

DONALD F. MILLER, C.S.S.R.

and all Christian history have revealed as reconcilable or not with the service of God.

Sometimes the question is asked by those who, in good or bad faith, have accepted a traditional anti-Catholic charge that celibacy is a cloak for all sorts of vice, particularly the vice of impurity. On their lips the full question should read: "Why don't priests and nuns marry and escape from the horrible state of sin in which they live?"

Sometimes, too, the question is asked by persons who, finding chastity a most difficult virtue to practice themselves even for a short time, draw the conclusion that therefore nobody can keep a vow never to indulge in the pleasures of sex. "I can't do it," they seem to say; "therefore nobody can."

The answer to the question of why priests and nuns don't marry may be found fundamentally in the Bible itself, and particularly in the example and the words of Christ and St. Paul and St. John. It has its full explanation in the laws of the spiritual life as it was set up by the Son of God, and practiced by Christians from the very beginning up to now. The answer also has its eminently practical side.

I. THE BIBLE BACKGROUND

IT IS most strange that many of the objections to celibacy come, not from pagans who know nothing about the Bible, but from a certain class of Christians who protest that the Bible is their sole source of religious truth and direction. It is strange because the Bible has so many very specific things to say about the superior excellence, in a spiritual sense, of virginity over the state of marriage. The Bible nowhere runs down marriage, as if it were a sinful or imperfect state; it merely affirms that virginity is a nobler state in the eyes of God than marriage.

The testimony of the Bible is overwhelming. One might begin with the fact that the Son of God, when He became man, chose a virgin, a perpetual virgin, for His mother. If there were something intrinsically wrong with celibacy, if that state were, as Mike Wallace hints, irreconcilable with the service of God, how could God Himself ever choose a virgin for His mother, knowing that her example would always have a powerful influence on the world?

One might take the example of Christ Himself. He came to be a model for the world. No one would say that He demanded that all His followers carry out all the counsels of perfection that He illustrated in His life. But it would be equally foolish to say that none of His followers would be allowed to carry out any one of the examples of perfect love of God that He gave. He was abjectly poor. No individual is commanded voluntarily to adopt such abject poverty as He adopted; but no individual is forbidden to adopt it for the love of God. He chose to be unmarried. He did not thereby command all His followers to be unmarried, but He did set an example for the few who would want to do the most perfect thing by choosing the celibacy He chose.

He put this very truth into exact words. When the apostles objected, as related in Matthew, 19:9-12, that under His absolute prohibition of divorce and remarriage, it might not be expedient for a man to marry at all, He had an answer. He told them that not all men could give up marriage altogether, but some could by the grace of God. Then He added these words: "For there are eunuchs who were born so from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs who are made so by men; and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven. He that can take, let him take it." Certainly He was referring to no physical mutilation of self, forbidden by His own fifth commandment. He was referring to a renunciation of

the use of sex by voluntary celibacy or virginity. How much clearer, on the value of this, could He be?

St. Paul, who is used by many Bible Christians almost as if he wrote the whole Bible himself, and sometimes as if his words supersede those of Christ in the Gospels, is just as clear on the spiritual nobility of celibacy.

In his instruction on marriage in the 7th chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians, he warns married people that they must faithfully carry out the contract of marriage, that is, rightly use the privilege of marriage. "Defraud not one another," he says, "except perhaps, by consent, for a time, that you may give yourselves to prayer: and return together again, lest Satan tempt you for your incontinency." (verse 5) Then he adds that he says this not by commandment, but by indulgence, because "I would that all men were even as myself." He is referring to his celibacy, for he immediately adds: "I say to the unmarried and to widows: it is good for them so to continue, even as I." (verse 8)

St. Paul does not drop the subject here, with a reference to his own example, but he comes back to it again later on in the same chapter of the same letter. He compares the lot of the married with that of the unmarried, and definitely states that it is easier for the latter to serve and love God perfectly. "He that is without a wife is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a

wife is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: and he is divided." (verses 32-33) Then he applies the same principles to married and unmarried women, and draws a conclusion that does not condemn marriage, but does make clear the superior excellence of virginity: "He that giveth his virgin in marriage doth well; and he that giveth her not doth better." (verse 38)

St. John, called the disciple beloved by the Lord, was also a virgin who was inspired to reveal to the world the superiority of virginity over marriage. In the 14th chapter of his Apocalypse, in which he is describing the delights of heaven, he speaks of virgins who "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were purchased from among men, the first fruits to God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth there was no lie: for they are without spot before the throne of God." (verse 4-5)

Therefore the first answer of priests and religious and nuns as to why they don't marry is that the Bible, which they accept as the revealed word of God, in texts that are to be found both in Catholic and Protestant versions of the Bible, recommends virginity as the state in which God can be most perfectly loved and served. It nowhere commands any individuals to choose a life of virginity; but it certainly approves those who do so for the love of God.

II. SPIRITUAL BACKGROUND

IN THE texts quoted above there are references to the reasons for the superiority, in a spiritual sense,

of virginity over marriage. St. Paul sums it all up in his statement that, in the state of celibacy, it is easier to be concerned with the things of God than in the state of marriage. Not that the married cannot be concerned with God; nor that they cannot even become great saints. The only point St. Paul makes is that it is easier to become a saint if one remains free from marriage for the love of God.

This has deep roots in the spiritual teachings of Jesus Christ.

Christ taught that it is impossible for any human being to love God and save his soul without two things. The first is self-denial, penance, mortification of one's lower nature. The second is the help of God obtained through prayer.

In regard to the first requirement, Christ taught that there are degrees of self-denial. The lowest degree, that without which nobody will ever prove himself worthy to enter heaven, is that of sufficient self-denial to avoid mortal sin. Anything and everything must be given up to escape mortal sin. "If thy right eye scandalize thee (that is, lead thee into serious sin), or thy right hand scandalize thee, or thy right foot scandalize thee, pluck it out or cut it off and cast it from thee. For it is expedient for thee that one of thy members should perish, rather than that thy whole body should go into hell." (Matt. 5:29-30) Christ said the same thing of father, mother, brother, sister, home, lands, possessions — all must be given up if necessary to avoid serious sin.

The second degree of self-denial

that Christ demanded of all His followers is that through which they will show themselves to be striving to be perfect according to their state. "Be ye perfect," He said, "as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matt. 5:48) This means that all must forgive their enemies up to seventy times seven times; all must try to avoid even one unkind word; all must be meek and humble and helpful to all their neighbors. In short, all must practice enough self-denial to avoid or at least to try to avoid, even small or venial sins.

The third degree of self-denial which Christ did not command but did approve for those who would accept it, is that in which His followers would give up even good and sinless things for the love of Him. Then He asked the fishermen who were to be His apostles to give up their boats, their nets, their means of livelihood, even their homes and wives, to follow Him, and they made the sacrifice at His request, not under a command. He invited a rich young man to become one of His apostles, on condition that He would get rid of all his riches. The rich young man was not equal to the sacrifice, and went his way.

None of the above were sacrifices that Christ demanded under pain of sin, mortal or venial. They were invitations to give up good things for the sake of greater love and greater service of God. So it is with the giving up of marriage and all use of sex. Two of the apostles whom Christ called, John and Paul, never married

at all. It is quite well-grounded in historical tradition that the others gave up living with their wives after they were called by Christ. Clearly Christ proved that the love of God can be sufficient to take the place of all human love; the giving up of marriage can be the starting point of a life of special service and dedication to God.

The second requirement for salvation in any state is that of God's help obtained through prayer. On the one hand Christ said, "Without Me, you can do nothing." On the other hand He said that miracles could be wrought, mountains could be moved, through prayer. Call a faithful life of celibacy a miracle if you will; it is surely not outside the range of miracles Christ promised as the fruits of prayer.

And the 1900 years of Christianity have proved over and over again the readiness of God to work this so-called miracle. The lives of thousands of canonized saints, and of countless uncanonized saints, both men and women, reveal that celibacy is not only possible; it is a sacrifice that makes possible a life of highest dedication to the love of God, and the noblest deeds of charity toward one's fellow man.

III. PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

WHEN all this has been said, it still remains true that the Catholic Church commands no one of her members to renounce marriage forever, just as Christ did not demand this of any of His followers. There-

fore the wording of Mike Wallace's question is unrealistic and, to use a popular word, "loaded." He says: "Why is marriage forbidden to priests and nuns?" The implication is that a man or woman becomes a priest or nun, and wakes up to find the Church forbidding them to marry.

The truth is that nobody ever has to become a priest or nun, and nobody can become a priest or nun without knowing, through many years of preparatory training, that, if they freely choose this vocation, they are freely choosing to renounce marriage for the love of God. In the Catholic mind, the priestly and religious state are synonymous with celibacy; nobody thinks of the former, or deliberates on entering it, without thinking of and deliberating on the latter.

This fact is based squarely on the teaching of Christ and St. Paul and St. John, and on the spiritual advantages of celibacy as outlined above. But there are many practical reasons that, throughout the course of history, have added their weight to the decision of the Church that the priesthood (of the Latin rite) and the religious life, either for men or women, be identified with the state of celibacy.

All who take the official vow of chastity, which means celibacy for life, in the Catholic Church may be divided into three classes. They are 1) priests; 2) religious men and women in active orders; 3) contemplative monks and nuns. While the work that each of these classes does could be done by married men and women, it should be obvious to any-

body that it can be done much more easily, more perfectly, more continuously, more selflessly, by those who have renounced marriage for the love of God.

Take the priest. He is called to be a father to all the people entrusted to his care. He must love all equally and spiritually. He must be at the service of all at all times, without regard for personal considerations. He must receive and hold sacred the secrets of individuals, both in the confessional and as they are brought to him in personal consultations. From a practical viewpoint, could anybody possibly deny that it is far easier for him to fulfill his office as a celibate than if he had a wife and children dependent upon him? Especially when it is remembered that he makes his vow of celibacy primarily out of love for God?

Take the active religious orders. There are such orders of priests, of brothers, of sisters, carrying out the works of mercy in an organized way. They build hospitals; they administer homes for the aged; they take care of orphans; they establish and conduct religious schools; they go to foreign lands to preach the Gospel where it has not yet been heard. This fact must at least be recognized by everyone: that if all of them were to marry tomorrow, most of the work that they do for suffering humanity would cease to be done. Their vow of celibacy represents the motive for their sacrifice and work in behalf of others, namely, the love of God; and it gives them the freedom from per-

sonal family ties without which that work could never be done on so vast a scale.

Take the contemplative orders of men and women. They dedicate their whole lives to prayer and penance for their fellow human-beings. They are built on the solid principles that prayer is more necessary than action for the salvation of souls, and that some human beings must make atonement for the sins of others if the latter are to be saved. From a purely practical viewpoint again, there could be no orders of men and women dedicated wholly to prayer and penance for their fellowmen, unless their members were celibates.

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Thus the question of Mike Wallace should be answered by any intelligent Catholic, and even by a non-Catholic who has studied his Bible and the spiritual order established by Christ, and the history of Christianity.

Marriage is not "irreconcilable with the service of God;" it is a noble state, elevated into a sacramental state by Jesus Christ. But the same Christ, in His own words and in those of His celibate apostles, John and Paul, made it known that celibacy is a higher state, one in which a man or woman can manifest a higher love of God than in the state of marriage.

Marriage is not "forbidden to priests and nuns." Rather those who choose to be priests and nuns after many years of self-testing and training, freely choose to be celibates,

as a means of living a life of the highest love of God and most unselfish love of their fellow men. Even men and women outside of religious orders may choose to make a vow of virginity, a vow to renounce marriage forever for the love of God, and, because of Christ's clear teaching, are

recognized by the Church as entering thereby into a more perfect state than the state of marriage. "He that can take," said Christ, "let him take it."

(Note: Liguorian Pamphlets publish a 5c booklet for interested lay persons under the title, "How to Make a Vow of Virginity.")

CORRECT ANSWERS

The true Church is the custodian not only of human wisdom but also of divine revelation. Men searching on their own for philosophic and religious truth are constantly confused. Religion, however, has the benefit of divine revelation and can provide the individual with suitable spiritual aids founded not upon faulty and uncertain human opinion, but upon the authority of God Himself.

That kind of religion is supremely necessary. Here is a man on this planet, beginning a journey into eternity. Enormous stakes are involved — heaven or hell. Yet man himself comes into the world badly equipped for making true decisions upon the most complicated problems of human existence.

Whence did he come? Where is he going? What God shall he serve and how shall he serve Him? How can he find the resources to control his appetites and fears? He cannot do it by himself. Neither can a man attain by his own unaided investigations the knowledge that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has come down from heaven to redeem us from sin. Such knowledge comes only through religion.

Without religion man can only grope uncertainly toward some such understanding. He needs religion for the correct answers.

FOLLOWING HIS FOOTSTEPS

Son of God and Herald of His heavenly kingdom, He was happy in bending compassionately over the wounds of humanity and the tattered rags of poverty. He was not satisfied with proclaiming the law of justice and charity; nor with condemning with withering anathemas the hard-hearted, the inhuman, the selfish; nor with the warning that the final sentence of the last day will have as the norm of its judgment the exercise of charity, as the proof of the love of God. But He spent Himself personally in order to help, to heal, to feed. Certainly He did not ask whether, and to what extent, the misfortune before Him happened because the political and economic order of His time was defective or lacking. He was not indifferent to that. On the contrary, He is the Lord of the world and its order. But just as His action as Saviour was personal, so He wished to meet life's other misfortunes with a love that was personal. The example of Jesus is today, as every day, a strict duty for all.

Pius XII, *Christmas Message of 1952*

Talking about the Faults of Others

Suggestion: Don't make the mistake of applying these remarks and questions to somebody else. They are meant for YOU.

A PART of the weakness of human nature is the inclination to talk about the faults of others.

The strongest characters in the world are those who are capable of resisting this almost universal human habit of indulging in detrimental gossip about others. Weak characters gratify any number of weaknesses by gossip: jealousy, spite, revenge, greed, pride, vanity, and unresisted antipathies. Strong characters recognize the tendencies, but remember too well their own faults and shortcomings to take or give notice of the faults or sins of others.

The world pays tribute to the strength that underlies an ability to take no part in common gossip. It is not unusual to hear even inveterate gossipers remark about certain people that they are never heard to speak in an unkind way about others. The sad thing is that one hears this praise most frequently at wakes and funerals about the dead, as if there had been no cause to notice it or be influenced by it before.

Self-questioning that may be done to test the strength of one's character on this basis may take the following forms:

1. Am I inclined to talk critically of people who have gone ahead

of me, and who are being praised by others?

2. Do I take the edge off praise that is given to others by suggesting unworthy or selfish motives for their praiseworthy conduct?
3. Do I find it difficult to wait to tell someone when I have learned of a fault or sin committed by an acquaintance or neighbor or friend?
4. When I suspect that others have criticized me, do I go out of my way to run them down to my friends?
5. Do I have special difficulty in overcoming my tendency to criticize those in authority over me?
6. When I am in company, do I find myself quickly falling in with the conversation of others when its topic is the faults of others?
7. Do I let my antipathies for certain people become widely known by my inability to keep from talking against them?

It takes real strength and long practice and high spiritual motives to reach the point where none of these questions need be answered in the affirmative.

Thomas More:

Twice Married Saint

LOUIS G. MILLER, C.S.S.R.

SAINTS are not cast in one common mold; each has his own distinctive personality. Some by nature are grave, and others are gay. In this latter group surely belongs the gracious chancellor of England and martyr to the faith under King Henry VIII, Thomas More.

More was born in 1478, and showed himself to be something of a scholar and a wit even in his early years. He won renown as a lawyer and then as a judge, married twice, and raised a family of four children together with another child whom he adopted. In 1521 he was knighted, and in 1528 was named Lord Chancellor of all England. But these were difficult and dangerous times. King Henry had set his heart on a maid-in-waiting in his court, Ann Boleyn, and was determined that at any cost his marriage bond with his wife, Catherine, must be set aside. Under the law of God such a thing could not be done, and in such a crisis More knew what he had to do.

Describing himself as "the king's good servant, but God's first," he refused to take the oath acknowledging Henry as spiritual head of the Church and as a consequence, after some months' imprisonment, was beheaded by order of the king on July sixth, 1535.

Such is the brief outline of More's life. Here are a few biographical facts which might be of interest and a source of encouragement to married people.

EX-SEMINARIAN

THERE are more than a few married men who in their younger years spent a period of time studying for the priesthood. Then they reached the decision that they had no vocation to that way of life, and returned to the world. If there are any who foolishly are inclined to feel ashamed of this fact, looking upon themselves as "spoiled priests," they can take comfort from St. Thomas More. He also tried himself in the

monastic life, as an early biographer writes, "four years and more, full virtuously and religiously in great devotion and prayer with the monks of the Charterhouse in London, without any manner of profession or vow, either to see and prove whether he could frame himself to that kind of life, or at least to sequester himself from all temporal and worldly exercises."

But his calling did not lie in the monastery. Again to quote his early biographer: "God had allotted him another estate, not to live solitary, but that he might be a pattern to married men, how they should carefully bring up their children, how dearly they should love their wives, how they should employ their endeavors wholly for the good of their country, yet excellently perform the virtues of religious men."

FIRST MARRIAGE

MR. John Colt of Essex County had three daughters of marriageable age, and it was in this direction that More turned his attention. After a few calls at the Colt home, he admitted to himself that he felt himself most charmed by the second oldest of the girls. Yet in a classic instance of the heart being ruled by the head, he put aside personal preference. The oldest girl, Jane, was also attractive to him in her own way. More felt it would be a humiliation to her to be passed by. He therefore addressed his proposal to her, and was accepted.

Mr. Colt could not but be pleased with the match, and despite the fact

that More settled for his second romantic choice, the marriage was a very happy one. Four children were born of it, Margaret, Elizabeth, Cecily and John. A fifth child died at birth, and with it, to More's great grief, died its mother. On her tombstone More had inscribed two words which clearly show that this was far more than a marriage of convenience. "Uxorcula Mori," is the expression used, and perhaps the closest English equivalent to the overtones of the Latin would be — "More's dear little wife."

NEW MARRIAGE VENTURE

HAVING lost his wife, More found himself with four small children, the oldest only six. For a while he struggled along determined to keep his family together. But he soon reached the conclusion that his little ones needed a mother for their proper care.

He cast about him, therefore, for a new wife and his choice fell on a widow, Alice Middleton. This time even more than the first More consulted practical realities. His friends, more romantically inclined, were horrified at his choice. "She is neither young or handsome," they pointed out to him, "and she is seven years your senior." To which he replied: "Very true, but I know her to be an active and vigilant housewife and she will, I am sure, be devoted to my children."

Poor Mistress Middleton More, it is clear, was no paragon in the practice of small virtues. Some who knew

her described her as "loquacious, ignorant and narrow-minded." More had his troubles with her, it is certain, and when he needed her most, in the last dark days of his life, as he languished in prison, she was of such small mind as to find More's stand against the king foolish and incomprehensible.

Yet it would be a mistake to say that More was unhappy in this second marriage. With his strong character and buoyant and gay disposition, he was not one to be henpecked on one side, or sullen and moody on the other. Mistress More kept an orderly household, and, as More had hoped, she was a good and devoted mother to his children.

Erasmus, More's great and scholarly friend, who came from the continent to spend long periods as More's house-guest, has left a vivid description of the warm spirit which there prevailed. There was laughter and music, and no heavy spirits permitted, and even the practical Mistress More was charmed by her husband into learning to play a few measures on the harp and the flute.

CHARITY UNFEIGNED

OTHER biographers give further evidence pointing up the fact that More was the very model of a family man, devoted to his wife and children, spending with them every hour he could spare from the increasingly heavy duties of state laid on him by his royal master. They give us an insight into his other charitable activities as well. More, we are told, used to walk through the back alleys

of his town and inquire about the needy families, and when he found any he would assist them, and even invite them to his house. When he heard of a woman being in labor in the neighborhood, he would if possible go to a quiet corner and pray until the delivery was safely accomplished. Can we perhaps see in this little custom evidence that the wound in his heart caused by the death of his first wife and child still sometimes bled afresh?

END AND BEGINNING

MORE was a scholar, a friend of scholars, a writer of note, a wit, a respected counsellor of those in high places, a man esteemed for his knowledge of the law. But he was first and foremost a man of God: God's good servant in every fibre of his being. Much time was given each day to prayer and every day had to begin with Mass and Communion, whenever his confessor would permit him to receive.

Although lifted to the highest political eminence and invited to walk along his garden path in friendly confidence with the king himself, More was under no illusions as to the permanence of his good fortune. The king's infatuation with Anne Boleyn lay like a dark cloud on the horizon. Nothing could be allowed to stand in the way of His Majesty's misguided love, not even Thomas More, his dearest friend and counsellor.

When the King insisted that a law be passed by parliament by which all his English subjects must acknowl-

edge him as spiritual head of the church in England, able to make and break even the sacred law of indissolubility in marriage, More was one of those whose conscience would not allow him to accede.

From the Tower of London where he was confined, his humanness and wit still bubbled forth. He found a great source of consolation in his eldest daughter, Meg. To her on the day before his death he wrote these touching lines, which point up the warm love in his heart for his family. Margaret had waited along the way as More was led under guard from the courtroom where he had been sentenced to death back to his prison cell. Breaking through the escort, she

flung herself at her father, embracing him in a paroxysm of grief and love.

"I never liked your manner toward me better, than when you kissed me last. For I love when daughterly love and dear charity hath no leisure to look to worldly courtesy. Farewell, my dear child, and pray for me, and I shall for you and all your friends, that we may merrily meet in heaven."

Many a married man, husband and father, will find in Saint Thomas More a source of encouragement and a model in fulfilling the duties of his vocation. Thus they also can hope like this cheerful saint merrily to meet their loved ones whom they have won for heaven by their example and their prayers.

RIGHT OR WRONG?

Men's obligations to the social order can be confused and misunderstood without the guiding light of religion. Even though our conscience helps us to distinguish between right and wrong in general, how can we know the difference in specific and unusual cases? Sometimes it is hard to decide. Is divorce ever right? Or ever wrong? Is a father responsible for the conduct of his children? To what extent? Is it the duty of the state to uphold good morals, or is that entirely beyond its scope?

Organized religion is needed as our teacher in such matters. Some learned people, perhaps, will have the time and the ability to solve these problems for themselves. But what about ordinary people who have neither the time nor the education — who must make a living and raise a family? Who will instruct them in their obligations to God and to society if they do not depend upon the Church, which has been divinely instituted for this very purpose?

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BEHIND THE STARS

What is behind the heaven of stars? Another heaven of stars. And beyond that? The human mind has the inward urge to put the question again and again: What is behind the stars? And it is futile to answer: beyond, there is illimitable space, time and volume. Such words are but words, and they do not satisfy us. Nothing remains for us but to fall on our knees. . . .

For Wives and Husbands Only

May Married Women Ever Become Nuns?

Donald F. Miller, C.S.S.R.

PROBLEM: In your article in the September *LIGUORIAN* of last year, you mentioned that a wife who was permanently separated from her husband because of infidelity might possibly be accepted in a convent as a candidate for the religious life. Since I am in that situation, I would like to know how such a person would go about applying to become a nun, and what religious orders accept such persons.

SOLUTION: The very first step that should be taken toward entering a convent by a woman who has been married and is now rightly separated from her husband is that of clearing the matter of her vocation with her confessor or director. She should, of course, have a regular confessor who will get to know her spiritual life fairly well. When he does know her, his opinion of her ability to accept the burdens of the religious life should be asked, and his approval of any step in that direction should be obtained. Many older women feel a certain urge toward the religious life, but a regular confessor could tell them quite quickly that it is not meant for them. On the other hand, good vocations to the religious life are sometimes lost because the individuals involved never bring up the matter to their confessors.

Once the confessor's approval of the idea is obtained, it is wise for the person to talk over the matter with her pastor, or one of the other priests of her parish who knows her and her mode of life apart from the confessional. Sometimes there

are external circumstances (such as dependent children, poor health, etc.) that clearly indicate to one who knows the situation that it would be foolish for the woman even to apply for admission to a convent. The superiors of religious orders rightly insist that applicants have both the approval of their confessors and their pastors before they can be accepted as candidates. These are especially necessary in the case of older persons.

Armed with a testimonial letter from her pastor, and with a statement of approval on the part of a spiritual director, and with a good medical report on the state of her health, even a wife who is permanently separated from her husband may quite confidently apply for admission to a convent that accepts older persons. If the application is looked favorably on by the superior of the religious order, it will still be necessary to obtain the permission of the Holy See to enter. The diocesan authorities, through the pastor, will be able to get this permission.

Two orders of Sisters that accept older persons are the Visitation Sisters and the Sisters of St. Elizabeth. St. Francis de Sales, together with St. Jane Francis de Chantal, founded the Visitation Sisters with older women in mind, such as would not ordinarily be accepted for the religious life because of age. The Visitation Sisters are cloistered and chiefly contemplative. The Sisters of St. Elizabeth, founded in Milwaukee, work for convalescents and for the aged. Any pastor will have access to the addresses of their convents.

Cradle Marriages

Excerpt from a newspaper article: *Their friends said, "You'll be sorry!" But Ann Hackett, 16 and Neil Porter, 19, got married anyhow . . .*

WE received a letter from one of our readers in connection with an article in the January LIGUORIAN, "Teen-agers and the Opposite Sex." With the letter was a long article (with pictures) clipped out of one of the Nashville, Tennessee, daily papers, in which the author, a certain Mr. Herman Eskew, writes without censure of a marriage between a girl, who is sixteen years old and a junior in high school, and a man nineteen years old. The young man was not going to school at the time the essay was written for the paper.

The girl is continuing her high school work as though it were quite proper for children to go to school and to play at being married at the same time. Mr. Eskew in his report on the case in no way questions the propriety or the wisdom of this cradle marriage. Insofar as he adopts such an attitude we believe that he does a tremendous disservice to the young people of the day. We believe that he puts a kind of tacit approval on cradle marriages and on the emerging

aspirations of most teen-agers who at the age of fourteen and fifteen would like nothing better than to escape the books by marrying Cary Grant or Marilyn Monroe, or since that is impossible, the boy or girl who sits across the aisle in school.

This is the letter from our correspondent in Nashville, Tennessee, who sent us the clipping from the paper and who is quite disgusted with its contents and its tone. We do not blame her.

* * *

Dear Father,

After that very interesting article you wrote concerning teen-agers in your recent issue of THE LIGUORIAN, I thought you would no doubt be interested in the enclosed article concerning teen-agers, taken from a local paper here in Tennessee. Can you think of some way to make the story in the article unpleasant, ugly, sinful and the manner of life it suggests undesirable and unappealing to other teen-agers?

What should be a parent's answer to a teen-ager who reads this type of

true story and says, "If *they* can do it (get married at sixteen) and be happy, why can't we?" I, for one, was stumped for an answer. The young couple of the story love each other; they are young; they know what they want from life; and they are doing their best to obtain it. The boy is done with school. The girl intends to continue in school. They are having the happiness of living and being together while they work toward their goals.

What is there in this to discourage the teens who are in love and who are able to support themselves, from wanting to do the same thing themselves? Should their parents make them wait and thereby cause them to miss the few years that they could spend together in loving each other and working for the future?

This type of thing is quite common in this part of the country; and the teen-agers see it in real life — next door, amongst their school friends, even in their own families. Because they see it happening so often, it is almost impossible for them to put much stock in articles such as the one in your January issue, "Teen-agers and the Opposite Sex." Is it their fault? What have you to suggest?

I shall look for your answer in a forthcoming issue of your magazine.

Sincerely,
Mrs. N.N.

* * *

OUR answer follows. It is given with a prayer that our correspondent may find a way of prevent-

ing her children from making the mistake of thinking that cradle marriages are the answer they are seeking in their quest for happiness.

Dear Mrs. N.N.,

It is not correct to assume, as you do in your letter, that cradle marriages always turn out well. They may offer happiness during the first few years or months, but eventually, at least in many cases, they tend to crack up, either through the desertion of the husband who finds marriage to a child irksome or through a decree of the divorce court, secured by the wife who, when she grows up, discovers that marriage is quite different from what she thought it was when she was a child. We believe that statistics will substantiate this statement quite conclusively.

Teen-agers who are brought up in the teaching, the tradition and the practice of their holy religion (frequentation of the sacraments, prayers said in the home and the guidance of wise priests) and who are carefully nurtured, instructed and trained by good parents will not ordinarily be taken in by the immaturity and the shortsightedness of their contemporaries.

So, when you ask, "Is it their fault?" our answer is, "Not entirely." We believe that parents are more at fault in most instances of cradle marriages than the children. Probably the parents should never have entered marriage themselves.

Of course, even teen-agers of the faith and of good families may be

tempted to envy and to imitate those who taste of fruit before it is ripe. But their training and the common sense that was instilled in them by their parents will prevent them from succumbing to the temptation. Children generally think and act and are as their parents think and act and are. Generally a foolish teen-ager is the result of foolish parents. By the same token a prudent and a "thinking" teen-ager is the result of prudent and "thinking" parents.

It is our conviction that teen-agers can be told what is wrong with cradle marriages, and if their minds have developed at the same pace as their bodies, they will have no difficulty in understanding and accepting what they have been told.

Let them be told this:

God has given to marriage a very definite purpose. (There is no doubt, we hope, in the minds of Mr. Eskew, his editor and the 19-year-old gentleman who found his bride crooning in a cradle, namely, in the junior grade of the local high school, about the fact that God instituted marriage, as the first book of the Bible so clearly points out.) God made marriage. And God made marriage for the purpose of continuing the human race. *The primary purpose of marriage is the procreation and education of children.*

A girl fifteen or sixteen years old can fulfill the primary purpose of marriage physically. She can have children. But in nine cases out of ten here in America she is not equipped

mentally, domestically (if such a word may be used), socially and morally for the heavy responsibilities of marriage. Marriage is for adults. And even adults, if they are not properly trained, have difficulty in making a success of marriage. Review the records of the divorce courts. Observe the people in your neighborhood. Read the columns of the love-lorn letter-writers in the newspapers.

A teen-age girl of 16 is not an adult. She is on the border between childhood and adulthood. In many matters she thinks like a child and acts like a child. Her thoughts are not the thoughts of a grown person. Her chief concern very often is "rock and roll," the corner drugstore, boy-friends and clothes that make her look like an unmade bed. Her sense of the seriousness of life has not yet fully developed.

To beget and to raise children, to run a home, to refuse to be taken in by the false suggestions and vain promises of a pagan world, to persevere in the carrying out of pressing duties in the face of monotony, tiredness, sickness, disappointment and possibly a meandering and philandering husband — this definitely demands more than the mentality of a child.

The alternative, of course, is not to have children.

The sixteen-year-old girl of the article in the Nashville newspaper is quoted as saying that she wants to finish her high school education,

work as a secretary for a time and then have a family.

How can this be done?

Do a boy and girl get married and then live as though they were not married, that is, under the same roof, but as brother and sister? Is it possible that such an agreement could be made between a man and a woman who really love each other and who want to get married so that they can live together?

If they live together as husband and wife, babies will be born. If babies are born, that is the end of the high school aspirations for the teenager, that is, if she wants to take care of the babies. Babies can be prevented by contraception. But contraception, according to the Bible, the teaching of the Church and the dictates of right reason is always and under all circumstances a mortal sin. From that fact there is no way of escape for young people who are desirous of doing the will of God.

It certainly would seem that the best policy for young people to follow is to put off marriage until they are in a position to accept the responsibilities of marriage. Teen-agers are not in this category in almost all cases. There may be exceptions. They are few and far between.

It is quite probable that if the couple in the child-marriage reported by Mr. Eskew in the Nashville paper were reminded of the primary purpose of marriage and of the inability of a child in the junior grade of high

school generally to measure up to its grave demands, they would look surprised and say, "Where'd you get all that? We never heard of such strange things. What are you talking about? Primary purposes and all that? Doesn't make any sense to us. We just wanted to get married, that's all. What's wrong with getting married? Why clutter it all up with a lot of words? And God? What are you putting God into it for? What's God got to do with marriage?"

There isn't much that can be done if that is the state of the minds of those people. There's no place from which to start.

We are hopeful that it is not the state of mind of all the teen-agers, writers, editors and people in general in the Tennessee area or in any other area of the country, for all that.

If it is, perhaps the Russians are ahead of us after all. And that, in more things than in the invention and the launching of Sputniks.

Sincerely,

Ernest F. Miller, C.S.S.R.

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SHOCKING NEWS

Speaking of electricity leads naturally into the following item.

"I've got a rather distasteful job," remarked a British genealogist. "A woman employed me to look up her family tree, and I've got to inform her that one of her relatives was electrocuted in America."

"Don't worry about it," replied his friend. "Just write that the man occupied the chair of applied electricity at one of America's public institutions." —*Labor*

? ? ? Readers Ask... ? ? ?

The Age of the World

Louis G. Miller, C.S.S.R.

Scientists have found that the earth is hundreds of millions of years old, and that the development of the earth covered millions of years, from the age of simple plants and animals 500 million years ago to the age of man one million years ago. If this is true, how can the story of creation as given in the first chapter of the Book of Genesis be true?

IT CAN indeed be taken as a proven scientific fact that the earth is hundreds of millions of years old. Various sciences give evidence of this fact: geology, chemistry, even radioactivity, since the rate of atomic deterioration can be chronologically computed. In regard to man, weighty scientific opinion puts his first appearance on the earth as something like one million years ago.

How, it is asked, can we reconcile this with the Scriptural account of creation and the following history of mankind, which seem to involve so much less time?

It should be clear to any impartial reader that the book of Genesis makes no claim to be a *complete* history of the earth and of mankind living upon it. The intention of the author was primarily religious: to give the basis for the sacred history of the Hebrew people which was to follow. Certain truths are clearly taught, for example, the creation of all things by God in the beginning of time, the special creation of man as the object of God's special providence, the unity of the human race, original sin, and the promise of a Redeemer.

All these and other religious facts, many of which depended upon divine rev-

elation, are set forth in the first chapters of Genesis under the form of a narrative. They are cloaked in highly imaginative, poetic language, containing much imagery and many figures of speech.

Take for example the description in Genesis of the world as being created by God in six days. Obviously this is a literary device of the author. The Biblical account is true to the extent that it was intended to teach truth, namely the fact of creation by almighty God. In using the figure of six days, the author was presenting in popular form the deeper truth that creation was a gradual, orderly and progressive process.

As for the appearance of man upon the earth, the Church does not hold to any special chronology; she leaves that to the scientists to determine. She does hold this truth to be certain, that there was a moment when God infused into man an immortal soul, and that this first truly human being and his wife are the parents of the human race as endowed with intelligence and free will, responsible for their actions to the God who created them.

Father Bruce Vawter, an American scripture scholar of some note, sums it up as follows:

"The scientific study of man's origins, and the religious study found in Genesis are separate and distinct. They rarely overlap. Where they do briefly and superficially coincide, there is no conflict between them, but rather the closest harmony. Where they go their separate ways, each has important things to tell us to make our understanding complete and integral."

SIDEGLANCES

By the Bystander

Unions in the Catholic Press

Our Sunday Visitor recently carried an exchange of views on the subject of labor unions between two Jesuits. On the one side was Father John E. Coogan, S.J., rather a newcomer in the field of industrial relations, and a professor at Detroit University. On the other side was Father William J. Smith, S.J., who for many years has been conducting schools on industrial relations and has written several books and many articles on various facets of the subject.

Father Coogan did not directly write the article that presented his views in *Our Sunday Visitor*. Rather he was quoted at great length and with flowing approval by Father Richard Ginder, an associate editor of *Our Sunday Visitor*, principally from an article currently appearing in a magazine called *The Priest*, also co-edited by Father Richard Ginder. Father Coogan's thesis may be summed up, we believe without any misrepresentation, in a single sentence. It is this: Right-to-work laws are good, because all American unions are neutral (that is, religiously uncommitted), therefore secularistic, therefore essentially corruptive, therefore out-of-bounds for Catholics. Right-to-

work laws would thus guarantee to Catholics the right to stay out of all American labor unions, to none of which they should ever have belonged in the first place.

Since Father Ginder, in beating the drums for Father Coogan's thesis, makes a sweeping assertion about the Catholic Press in general on its attitude toward labor unions, we feel obligated, as a small voice of the Catholic Press, to say something about his accusations. This is what he says: "Readers of the Catholic Press over the past several years must have formed the opinion that labor unions could do no wrong; that, like the Church, they occupy a privileged position in society; that the bosses, and owners, and stockholders are a pack of dirty devils to be baited at every opportunity." We sincerely hope that all our readers have had an opportunity to read Father Smith's cogent reply to these and other misrepresentations of both Father Ginder and Father Coogan. We further hope that they will read what follows here, even though they begin with strong feelings of antagonism for all labor unions in America today.

FIRST of all, it is difficult not to express emotional resentment at the charge that the Catholic Press, writing on industrial relations, (of which we have been a part) has given grounds for the opinion that "labor unions could do no wrong," and that "bosses, owners and stockholders are a pack of dirty devils." We ourselves, besides writing at times on labor issues, read with as much regularity as we can the writings of dedicated scholars and experienced Catholic leaders in labor relations as they appear in the Catholic Press. Among these are Msgr. George Higgins of the Social Action Department of Catholic University; Father Raymond McGowan, former head of that department; Father William Smith, S.J., spoken of above; and the editors of the ACTU (Association of Catholic Trade Unionists) labor papers (official or unofficial) in New York, Detroit and Chicago. Of course all this supplies but a small trickle of informative reading in comparison with the avalanche of anti-union propaganda that pours forth through much (though not all) of the daily newspapers and many other types of publications. But the point is that it is simply untrue and therefore defamatory to make the statement that the writings of these experts sum up to the conclusion that labor unions can do no wrong, or that all owners and bosses of business are "a pack of dirty devils." If any group in America is currently be-

ing branded as a pack of dirty devils, it is the more than 13,000,000 workingmen in America who belong to labor unions, in such articles as those of Father Coogan and Father Ginder. In the writings of the men we have named, and of many more in the Catholic Press, there will be found ample condemnation of abuses of the union principle; and frequent references to and accolades for owners and managers who possess and put into practice a high concept of social justice.

Most of the opponents of present day American unionism, including a handful of priests (a four-fingered handful, Father Smith calls them) fall into the twofold error to which human judgment is always prone. The first is that of wanting to destroy a good thing because it is at times abused; the second is that of denouncing all members of a group as guilty of the sins committed by some members of the group. They forget that this faulty logic works two ways. If Father Coogan's argument against Catholics becoming members of labor unions is logical, then, by the same argument, no Catholic employer could ever with a right conscience join the National Association of Manufacturers. This Association is neutral (that is, religiously uncommitted); it is secularistic in the strictest definition of the word; some of its members in the past have been and some today are corrupt, as senatorial hearings have recent-

ly brought out. If "neutral" means necessarily corrupt, and if the corruption of some means the corruption of all, then Catholic employers have not only a right but a duty not to join the N.A.M. The argument is fallacious, as everybody can see. So too is the argument that begins with the premise that neutral unions are necessarily corrupt, and that the corruption of some means the corruption of all.

Father Smith, in his answer to Father Coogan, lays bare the basic question at issue in the whole controversy over right-to-work laws. The question is this: Is the open shop a good thing, a desirable thing, for the workingmen of America? Basically, it is that in which an employer has the right to make individual job and wage contracts with individual workmen, unimpeded or uninfluenced by any considerations that might be presented to him by his employees as a whole. It is true that present laws state that non-union workers in any plant in which there is a union must be paid the union rate of wages. But it is naive not to face the fact that, with the open shop approved by law, employers opening new shops will find ways of excluding any union, and those having unions will, over the course of years, find ways of lessening and ultimately destroying the voice of the union.

This does not mean, we state emphatically that we believe all employers to be selfish, greedy, inconsiderate of their workers, in

short, as Father Ginder puts it, "a pack of dirty devils." What they will be, under a federally legalized open shop is victims of a kind of competition that will force them out of business if they do not make use of the open shop privilege to lessen the cost of the product they are sending to market. It works this way: Employer A manufactures shoes under a union shop contract with his men according to which he pays them \$2.00 an hour. Employer B sets up an open shop (with no union) making the same kind of shoes, but paying his men \$1.50 an hour. Employer B can, with that 50c differential in his hourly wage scale, drive Employer A out of business unless the latter does something unfavorable to his workers to meet the competition. The right to work eventually becomes the right to scramble for a job by offering to work for less than the man who holds the job.

SOMETIMES we are asked in our correspondence, why we treat of subjects like this in THE LIGUORIAN. One letter-writer recently expresses it as follows: "What goes on here? I look for and usually get, in THE LIGUORIAN, solid moral and spiritual help for living a good life and raising my family properly. Then every once in a while you slip in an article on labor or on unions that doesn't go with me at all. Why don't you stick to religion?" What better answer could we give than that the popes them-

selves, who are the moral and spiritual leaders of hundreds of millions of people, have taken the time to speak on these matters? Or what better answer than that there are serious moral implications in the problems of industrial relations, and that we firmly believe that it is profitless to talk about religion to people unless we also concern ourselves with their problems of keeping bread on

their tables, and clothes on their backs, and a shelter over their heads? By no means do we feel that we have all the answers to these problems, nor that such answers as we give are always the only right answers. We do ask that our evidence and arguments be considered and evaluated, and then accepted or rejected on their merits alone.

NONE QUITE LIKE HIM

In all the world there is none quite like the missionary. He is a special breed. Long and lanky, short and stocky, light or heavy — they all have the same ideal . . . to go places and do things for Christ and His Blessed Mother. They fear nothing but sin, and they fight with the only weapons they have — love and truth. The world is too small for them, and so they roam the four corners of the earth, visiting all men and bringing them the good news: the Word that gives eternal life. They have a common failing — they are color-blind. None of them are affected by the color of the skin, be it brown or black or yellow. After fifteen or twenty years they come home for a few months, only to find that "home" is no longer in America, but away over there in the place they have just left. They find that they have grown to love a people who once were so strange and who seemed so far away. They find a void in their hearts that the West cannot fill. So, it's back again to the natives who stole their hearts — for they have learned as no one else can — that for Christ and His Mother there are no such things as time and space, or wealth or color.

Northwest Progress

LAWS AND RELIGION

It takes religion to make men good. For despite all the laws that society enacts, there is still crime. Despite all the covenants nations enter into, there are still wars.

If there is to be any real basis for law and order, any incentive to universal human virtue, there must be a motive more compelling than man-made laws. Religion alone provides this. Working upon our conscience, it tells us that there is a God who knows every motion of our heart, to whom our most secret hatreds and jealousies are an open book, who knows the murderer for a murderer, the adulterer for an adulterer, the saint for a saint. This God is omnipotent. He can punish in a way that is most terrifying, and He can reward with unimaginable generosity.

Thoughts for the Shut-In

Volunteer Cross-Bearers

Leonard F. Hyland, C.S.S.R.

A SUGGESTION from one of our correspondents merits attention in this month's shut-in column. We quote from his letter:

"There are in the United States hundreds of thousands of 'Shut-Ins.' In addition to the patients there are those who must care for the patients, also to some extent shut-ins. I have in mind a woman in her 50's who could not move, talk, or help herself in any way. Her daughter cared for her. Can you imagine a more confined life? Without any opportunity of relaxation, I feel sure that hundreds of such caretakers themselves must become mental cases. All this, I believe, could be alleviated by friends; or those who would like to, could come in for visits to relieve the home nurse, etc.

"I am not even a Christian, less a Catholic, but believe you could make it a great movement. I would call it *Carriers of the Cross*. So many have huge weighty crosses; they need help. Members (no dues) could be given a small yet attractive cross, preferably with a hand grasping the base showing it is being carried. Their badge, could be the introduction to homes which need help. Christopher means Christ carrier. A large family of plants (The Mustard Family, lowly, but one that provides more food than any one other) is called Crucifer: Cross Carrier. Perhaps one of these could be the symbol.

"This could develop into a great movement, and should by no means be limit-

ed to any race, color or creed, but should be, just as the Christophers are, open to all.

"I am a school teacher of seventy, not in a position to do anything but suggest."

This is indeed a worthy thought on the part of our non-Catholic correspondent to bring relief where it is sorely needed.

Actually, there are already several religious orders, which have as their work to help these pitiful cases. For example, Rose Hawthorne, the sister of Nathaniel Hawthorne, became a Catholic in her middle years, and founded a religious order devoted to caring for those who were hopelessly afflicted with cancer. Her work was entirely for the poor; she would accept no recompense. Other groups of sisters work for the lepers. Then, of course, the Little Sisters of the Poor care for the old and sick without thought of human recompense.

However the need that he points up is very great. Certainly, it would be a great work of charity to look around one's neighborhood and find out if cases such as he describes are at hand. If so, one could, as he suggests bring much relief to the sick themselves and to those who care for them, by offering encouragement and actual physical help and relief where possible.

A motive for doing so would be the undoubted fact that in helping the sick, one helps Christ Himself.



readers retort

In which readers are invited to express their minds on articles and opinions published in *The Liguorian*. Letters must be signed and full address of the writer must be given, though city and name will be withheld from publication on request.

No Time to Learn

I enjoyed the article, "White Sails on the Amazon," in the January issue, but gaped when I came to this line: "At the stroke of midnight there they gathered, and unable to speak the language of Brazil. . . ." How then, can the good sisters expect to be able to teach their children and take care of the sick when they don't know how to speak so the people can understand them? Is this what Thomas Merton meant when he said our missionaries fail to come down to the people's level in many instances? I mean no criticism of these selfless nuns, but curiosity prompts me to ask this.

Flint, Mich.

R. W.

• *The answer is simple. The sisters were asked, without preliminary inquiries, to take over these missions in Brazil. They responded so quickly and promptly that they had no time to acquire even a working knowledge of the language of the mission country. But even while they learned the language they entered upon their work of teaching and caring for the sick, and they found that there is a language of the heart which carries understanding even if the words are lacking.*

The editors

The Well-dressed Lady

This letter is being dictated to me by eleven sodality friends of mine, all of them happily married, hoping to be bless-

ed with large families, most of them living near me in a Catholic neighborhood, and all still well-suntanned from last summer. We were very much alarmed by the article in the December issue which attacked the character of another sodality girl because she, while in her own front yard and with her own family, was dressed in brief shorts. We thought the question had been settled long ago as to the proper circumstances for that type of attire. The only thing we can agree with is that the girl was probably using bad taste inasmuch as her family was expecting a visiting priest. All of us wear brief shorts and sunclothes around our homes and back yards all summer. Of course, when we go out shopping, we have enough sense and modesty to change to proper dress. We are not so uninformed in matters of decency as to overlook the possibilities of offering occasion of sin and giving scandal in public places. We are only making reference to attire around the home. If we should no longer wear shorts and halters and swim suits in our own back yards, then perhaps we should also remove the swimming pools and tennis courts from our Catholic academies and colleges because of the brief attire worn in such activities.

Minnesota

C. H.

• *If BRIEF shorts and halters are proper and modest attire for the home, the front and the back yard, insofar as the*

neighbors and bell-ringing salesmen and delivery boys are concerned, then there is no need to rush upstairs and change clothes when a priest calls; and there is no need for ladies attired in this style to be embarrassed in the presence of a priest if they feel perfectly at ease in the presence of the little world around their home. What is modest dress in regard to other people, should be modest dress in the estimation of a priest. As for the swimming pools and tennis courts, if there is such an item in the back yard, no one will censure a lady if she is attired in a fashion that is proper for making use of such facilities — even in the front yard!

The editors

Large Families

Why do many priests take the Pollyanna-ish view that all you have to do is have lots of children and your family problems will disappear? A couple I know were definitely separating, and when the wife went to a priest, his only advice was that she should have more children so that she and her husband wouldn't have time to think about their problems. What this couple needs most is help to make their home a happy one before they bring children into it. I think this priest's advice was positively wicked. One reads too much of that in Catholic periodicals, as if child-bearing were a kind of cure-all. San Gabriel, Calif.

N.N.

• There are many strong arguments in favor of the good that comes from large families. Experience also proves that selfishness is often a by-product of limitation of one's family to a small number, even when this is done by non-sinful means. We do not say that it is a necessary by-product; only that it often is. In the last analysis, every problem of parents in this matter must be judged on its own merits as an individual case.

The editors

Too Many Big Words?

May I make a suggestion for the improvement of THE LIGUORIAN? Please don't use such big words! I just received the January issue, and after reading the first article on the interesting topic, "Is Lying Always a Sin?" I just had to write this note. I am a pastor, and most of my people never went beyond the eighth grade; I'm afraid that after struggling with all the big words in that article most of them would throw down the magazine in despair, if not disgust. I personally think THE LIGUORIAN the best magazine in the world, but I fear you are greatly restricting its usefulness by using such big words. Pennsylvania

Rev. P. T.

• This is a good bit of advice for us to mull over. We are aware that good writing, even for the most educated persons, does not require the use of many big words. We wonder a bit whether very many more of our readers have the same complaint, and we would be glad to be told about it.

The editors

A World of Women

I am writing about the article in the January issue, "Teen-agers and the Opposite Sex." Who ever thought up the idea that women make up their face only for men? If I lived in a jungle I would make up my face and it would not be for any man. Then about the nuns. Nuns don't use make-up because it is classed as a luxury and not because they are trying to get away from men. There is more. And this "more" is something to behold. You say, "What a dull world it would be with only men in it." There is one consolation in the sentence. At least an admission is made that women are not the weaker sex. But then! "The world would even be worse if it were made up only of women." What would be so horrible about that, may I ask? I would say more,

but I want to keep the friends that I have at Liguori.

Toronto, Ont.

V. R.

• *We are quite confident that our correspondent has men in her family and that she is much happier as a result of that arrangement. It would be an interesting experiment to have this good lady or any lady placed alone on an island in the mid-Pacific with gobs of make-up at her disposal. As for the nuns, let them speak for themselves; but we cannot pass up the opportunity to say that we have heard a good number of girls and women remark that the nuns have such beautiful complexions that they don't need make-up.*

The editors

Prejudice and Preference

Who are you to state, as you did in the January Pre-Marriage Clinic, that it is a mortal sin for parents to effectively oppose or prevent one of their children from marrying somebody on the ground of nationality alone? Catholics will accept Catholic dogma, but not by your shoving it down their throats under pain of mortal sin. You talk about "prejudice" in this matter, but have you ever heard of "preference?" Man has free will and may morally exercise his preferences without guilt. For a father to forbid his son or daughter to marry a certain individual for social, political, economic, religious or national reasons is his right. You have to consider the nationality of a group as a whole, even though there are good individuals in it. Sure, all nationalities are equal, but why push the issue and threaten hell's damnation to a father who won't allow his child to marry a person of his choice? Let me make one point clear: I try to love all races, colors, nationalities and creeds, but I can't buy your reasoning.

Kansas City, Mo.

R. A.

• *The full statement in THE LIGURIAN*

was this, and it should be remembered that the girl involved was past 21, therefore of age: "You (the parents) are doing a grave wrong by effectively opposing and preventing, on the ground of nationality alone, the marriage of one of your children to a person who is acceptable as a marriage prospect in all other respects." We must stand by this statement, carefully conditioned as it is by the clause that in all other respects the one involved is an acceptable prospect for marriage. Parents do have an obligation to try to prevent their children from marrying persons who are a bad risk because of moral, religious or character defects. If there are no such defects, it is hard to see how parents can escape blame by preventing the marriage of a son or daughter solely on the ground of nationality.

The editors

Prelude to Easter

We were so happy with your article, "The Truth about Santa Claus." I often meant to write you asking what answers I should give when my children ask about Santa Claus. You supplied all the answers. Now we hope you'll have another article on the same order in regard to the Easter bunny. My three-year-old is always asking how long it will be before Easter, and how the rabbit can carry all the eggs, etc.

Cedar Rapids, Nebr.

Mrs. K. K.

• *The Easter bunny myth is so fantastic that we think parents should give it short shrift. We have something in this issue about how it came to be associated with Easter.*

The editors

Our Lady's Virginity

In a recent issue, in reply to a question concerning our Lady's virginity, you make the statement that, since our Lady was promised the continued preservation of

her virginity, the body of her Son passed through her *virginal membranes*, leaving these physically intact. As a nurse, I must take issue with you for making this statement in this way. While it may be true that this was actually effected, the preservation of virginity would not, from a medical standpoint, necessarily require it, and the continuation of the myth that the unbroken virginal membrane is a *necessary* mark of virginity can be the cause of doubt in the minds of many innocent persons, a situation which I am sure you would not want to perpetuate.

Iowa City, Iowa

R.F.N.

• *Our correspondent here makes a worthwhile point, and one which, we hope, will clear up misunderstanding in the minds of those who may have mistaken ideas in this matter.*

The editors

St. Dymphna

In regard to a recent Liguorian shut-in column on mental illness, I'm sure you must know about St. Dymphna, patron of those who suffer from mental afflictions and nervous disorders. The devotion to her seems fairly new; only in recent years has she become well-known in circles or hospitals having to do with mental illness. Those interested can secure further information by writing to the League of St. Dymphna, 539 E. 13th St., New York, 9, N.Y.

Massachusetts

J.M.C.

Postscript to Christmas

After reading the article, "Is Lying Always a Sin?" in the January LIGUORIAN, I am wondering about the Santa Claus myth. Besides replacing the Christchild in many family celebrations, which is an admittedly evil result, is it not also intrinsically evil as coming under your heading "joking lies," which are always punished by God? To continue the practice under

the defensive attitude that "it is the custom" is about the same as permitting profanity because it has become customary. Are we Catholics to follow custom or should we not follow Christ?

Troy, N. Y.

C. B.

• *This correspondent is probably a new subscriber and did not see the article in THE LIGUORIAN of December, 1957, under the title, "The Truth about Santa Claus." Legend and truth are there separated for the guidance of parents.*

The editors

Billy Is Still with Us

In regard to your article, "A Catholic Viewpoint of Billy Graham," why don't you priests preach from your pulpits like Billy Graham on sin? Do you really think that talking about birth-prevention and those other things you say Billy doesn't preach about should come first? What good will it do if people have not accepted Christ and don't have Christ in their hearts? Billy Graham knows that the most important thing is to win souls to Christ. If people would only read the Bible, they wouldn't be Baptists, Catholics, or members of any sect but just Christians. I know that the Catholic Church teaches that her members are not allowed to read the Bible because they might interpret it wrongly. They are supposed to read only what the pope says. That means that the pope is the only Christian. If only you priests would become broadminded enough to forget your boastful pride about the Catholic Church, and would listen to a sermon by Billy Graham or Oral Roberts and recognize the Holy Spirit when it comes to you, you would become Christians. Then you would go out and preach Christ, and there would be no more adultery, drunkenness, church parties, card games, gambling, etc.

Seneca, Mo.

Mrs. F. Y.

• *There is wonderful good will expressed*

in this letter, but no little confusion too. It is not true, for example, that Catholics are forbidden to read the Bible; rather they are urged to read a part of it every day. As to being a Christian without being a Catholic or without belonging to a Church, one need only refer to our Lord's words to His first followers: "If he (who is guilty of offense) will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican." (Matt: 18:17)

The editors

No Blast from Us

When are you going to blast some of the men's magazines such as MALE, STAG, REAL, etc., etc.? These are the magazines that make men dissatisfied with the drab, dreary, dull, boring routine of most married men with kids. They yearn for some of the exciting adventures and jobs that the stories in these magazines tell about. They also make men wonder what their wives would look like in a bathing suit or negligee instead of the ever-present maternity gown. They wonder if their wife would ever again be as slim and lovely as the models in the magazines. What wife wouldn't feel hurt just a little to know that her husband would look at these girls and wish to himself that the girl he married could be like that again?

Tennessee

Mrs. T.

• It is our opinion that a blast at the trying-hard-to-be-rugged men's magazines would not do much good. If a man has slipped to the stage where he makes a habit of reading such magazines, he will not be deterred by a blast from us. To put it briefly, a blast does not last. There are probably some things to be corrected in such a man's life, but to correct these things it is necessary or helpful to know about the many and repeated happenings in his married life. A man who has the right idea about marriage before and af-

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ter he enters it, who makes the right kind of partnership out of married life, who gives and receives the mutual help husband and wife are bound to give to each other, ordinarily does not have trouble in regard to these magazines.

The editors

Kind Words

For quite some years I have been receiving THE LIGUORIAN although I have never sent a penny. I have always enjoyed it very much, finding a great deal of material for talks and sermons. I like the straightforward, simplified presentation of material. Being a missionary who has to beg for the support of his parish, I do not have too much money, but I do feel that I owe at least the enclosed to the upkeep of so good a Catholic magazine.

La.

Father C. J. C.

There is one lesson I have begun to learn from reading Readers Retort. I don't know if you planned it that way or not. I am learning to accept criticism without anger, and how to answer in a Christlike way: truthfully, humbly, charitably. You are teaching that lesson through your answers to letters you receive, over and above the lessons contained in the answers. It is something we all need to learn and practice.

Lynwood, Calif.

Mrs. P. E.

Thank you for helping me come back to my religion. I certainly understand more fully why the Catholic Church is the true Church. Now if I hear people criticizing our religion, I can put in my five cents' worth. There have been a number of times when I have gently brought such a conversation to an end while a number of mouths were still hanging open.

Pittsburgh, Pa.

S. M.

Many a single man in the world, if he knew about the great good he could do for his neighbor and for God as a lay brother, would be glad to quit the aimless and unsatisfying life he is living in the world and enter a monastery

OPPORTUNITY

for Single Men

HARRY F. WADE, C.S.S.R.

A BROTHER, in the meaning of the word as we are using it, is a man who becomes a member of some religious congregation, or order, or society by taking upon himself the obligation of the vows of religion. A brother is not a priest; he does not receive the sacrament of holy orders, but by his consecrated life in religion as a brother, he tries first of all to make himself more perfect in the love and service of God and at the same time by his work as a brother he tries to do good for others.

In general there are two classes of brothers: those who belong to communities largely or exclusively made up of brothers, and those who belong to communities composed of priests and brothers.

The former, such as the Christian Brothers and Brothers of Mary, devote themselves to schools for boys, and others, such as the Alexian Brothers and the Franciscan Brothers, take care of the sick. The second

class of brothers are known as lay brothers because they are the helpers and associates of priests in various kinds of work at home in their monasteries and in their work in the mission countries.

These lines are written about the brothers who are called lay brothers.

* * *

I MET one of these lay brothers, not long ago, in the sacristy of one of our large parish churches. At the time of our meeting he had been a brother for twelve years. He had been living as a single man in the world, working day after day at his regular job, when he learned about the life of the brothers. He made inquiries as to the possibility of his being accepted and received a favorable answer. He gave up his job, went to the house of training, called the novitiate, where he tried out the life of a brother and was tested as to his fitness for the life by his superiors. Eventually he was invested in the religious garb called a habit.

When he had completed the year of his novitiate he took upon himself, for a period of three years, the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. When the three years were over, he still loved his work and way of life and accepted these vows for life.

When I saw Brother at his work that morning in the sacristy and church, I was fascinated by his calm efficiency. There were four funerals and four marriages scheduled in the church for that day, a program which called for a good deal of arranging and re-arranging. It was highly interesting to see Brother and his altar boys preparing the altar and sanctuary for the various ceremonies. There were flowers to be taken from the sanctuary and then put back again; candles to be lighted, candles to be extinguished; florists with baskets of flowers and decorations; funeral directors and relatives of the deceased and young people in formal attire with happy faces. Brother handled it all with the ability of a general directing his troops. How he never lost patience and kept everything moving along smoothly, I'll never know. He knew his job well.

That evening I dropped in on Brother in his office in the rectory. I expected him to be exhausted; but he was sitting at his desk making some entries in one of the parish books. The phone rang, it seemed, every five minutes, and Brother would call one of the Fathers or take a message for them, make appointments for them. Occasionally he excused himself to answer the door bell and look up records for a parishion-

er or sound the call bell for one of the Fathers who was wanted. For all comers he had the same cheery smile and full attentiveness as though each was the first to break the "monotony of his monastic life."

As the evening wore on, the callers were less, and Brother was able to finish his desk work. He went to the breakfast room of the rectory and we had a glass of milk together. It was good to see Brother relax.

"What's next on the schedule, Brother?" I asked.

"Night prayers in a little while, and then to bed," he answered.

"What's the routine for tomorrow?"

Brother smiled. "The usual. Up before five; open the church for the early comers for the six o'clock Mass; put on the coffee; ring the community bell for rising at five and our meditation and prayers. Then I'll fill the wine and water cruets for all the Masses, line up the altar boys and assist the Fathers in the sacristy and church in any way I can."

"How long do you stay in the sacristy?"

"After the eight o'clock Mass I put away the vestments and chalices, tidy up the sacristy, then back to the rectory to handle the phone calls, the office calls; and when I have the opportunity I prepare the table for dinner. During the day I get in a half hour of spiritual reading, say my rosary; on some days I take the collection money to the bank, supervise the janitor's cleaning of the house and am at the beck and call of my superior to help wherever I can. It's

also my job to ring the community bell for the various times of prayer for the community."

Brother, with a smile, continued:

"I help the cook at meal time and serve the Fathers. After dinner I clean up the dining room and then join the Fathers in recreation for an hour. At 3:30 tomorrow afternoon I have a funeral to get ready for, and then back to my office, the bulletin, records and daily routine. I must also make my visit to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament and to our Blessed Mother. Then there's the community meditation at six. After that, supper, recreation, work in the office, night prayers and another 'Thank You, Lord!' for another day in His service."

"Good heavens, Brother! Doesn't it wear you out?"

"With too many days like I had today, Father, it would. But today was unusual. A half hour with our Lord before the Blessed Sacrament, after the noon recreation, relaxes the tension which builds up and is also a tonic for the rest of the day. And the evening meditation is physically restful as well as being helpful spiritually. Besides, there are no two days alike. And then there is the great consolation of being able to help others, especially the poor, the needy at the kitchen door. I love my work."

"Yes, your life is remarkable and a wonderful opportunity for service to others and to God. How did you come to choose this kind of life?"

"Well, for one thing, I felt a great dissatisfaction because I felt I was

not really accomplishing anything in the world. I felt that I was being carried around in circles by the whirlpool out in the world and that I was getting nowhere. Ever since I was a child I was taught and believed that loving God and one's neighbor was the only thing that really counted. The world I lived in paid little or no attention to God and, as for the neighbor, it seemed to be the rule, 'Do him out of everything you can.' I was really dissatisfied. My tour in the armed forces didn't help me either. It made me feel like a beast — kill or be killed."

"Did you think about the life of a brother at that time?"

"No. But when I got out of the service, I tried two or three jobs. All of them were the same thing over—working for a man whose only God was the dollar. I dated girls occasionally and thought of marriage. But the cold, grinding, religiously meaningless way in which a man has to make a living became more and more repelling to me. My faith gave me a great deal of consolation. I had a deep devotion to our Blessed Mother. I prayed to her to help me find my place."

"The religious life never occurred to me for a long time. I thought about being a priest, but circumstances put that out of the question. I was in my twenties, and the long course of studies for the priesthood actually frightened me. The deciding factor, I think, was a pamphlet I read. I picked it up one Sunday morning in the back of church. It

was about a young man who was making a living as an apprentice tailor. I saw in him the same mental restlessness that I was experiencing; the same yearning to better himself in the sight of God; the same craving to please God more. This young man became acquainted with a group of missionary Fathers who needed lay help very much. While they were busy with their priestly work they needed lay brothers to look after the material things in their way of life: cooking, cleaning, taking care of the church and sacristy and many other things. The young man volunteered and was later accepted into this missionary congregation. He worked untiringly, unselfishly and with the zeal of a saint.

"They were all little things he had to do. From a worldly standpoint he accomplished nothing big, but in the few years that he lived, God was very pleased with the way he dedicated himself to the humble tasks assigned to him. The miracles that God worked and still works through

his intercession are known to the whole world. His name was Gerard Majella — Saint Gerard Majella of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer."

"And that led you to contact one of the Redemptorist Fathers?"

"Yes," answered Brother. "That, I think, was the big push that moved me in the right direction. What Gerard did, and what is expected of me and of any other Redemptorist lay brother may not seem great in the eyes of the world, and at times it is not a bed of roses; but if it pleases God as the work of St. Gerard pleased Him, what else counts? Our missionary priests have St. Alphonsus and St. Clement as their models, but we brothers have our own humble, but great, St. Gerard."

Brother looked at his watch and excused himself to ring the community bell for night prayers. His place was in the first pew in front of the Fathers. I knelt behind him. Somehow I felt very honored.

Missionaries in Illness

The sick are precious jewels of the Church and powerful sources of spiritual energy. Rather than rebel against their sufferings they should accept them as manifestations of Divine Providence. In the serene and even joyous acceptance of the pains of illness they can find correction and expiation, tempering and purification, and the opportunity to be like Jesus and His Blessed Mother and to help them and the Church in the salvation of souls.

Pope Pius XII

We do not go to Communion because we are worthy, but that we may become less and less unworthy. The more grievous the sickness, the greater the need of the divine Doctor.

St. Bonaventure

Code of Catholic Conduct

The Persons in Your Parish

DONALD J. CORRIGAN, C.S.S.R.

Your Pastor

AS A boy, your pastor had a dream. It was a dream inspired by heaven, a dream in which he pictured himself at the altar and in the confessional, helping thousands of human beings to save their souls. As a youth, when the pleasures of this world were most attractive, he buried himself in a seminary, devoting twelve years or more to hard study, discipline and prayer. In the course of that exacting preparation he saw more than two thirds of those who started out with him toward the same goal give up their quest. Finally, on the day of his ordination, he knelt before his bishop and stepped back *another Christ* with all the powers of the priesthood.

All priests are called *Father*, but it is your pastor and his assistant priests who preeminently deserve that title. As much as a natural parent has a fearful responsibility in rearing his children, so much greater is the burden of a good parish priest, because he must answer to God for so many souls committed to his care. He is a man who has given up the delights of family life, to take upon his shoulders the worries and spiritual destinies of all the families of his parish. Not for worldly fame or pleasure or riches did he become a priest, for there is very little of these to be found in his calling. The only real reward of a good pastor in this life is the knowledge that his parishioners are trying to be good Catholics and making their way toward heaven.

The Teaching Brothers and Sisters

TOO often we take the brothers and sisters in our parish schools for granted. Seldom do we remember that, in a worldly sense, they are the poorest paid teachers in the nation, while so frequently they are unequalled in their profession. In the United States thousands of these religious men and women have dedicated themselves to the life of teaching our Catholic children, to help them learn above all the true liberty that is theirs as adopted sons and daughters of God. Not very often do you see the nuns and brothers outside their home or the school room, but their gentle influence is by no means confined to the classroom; from the classroom it radiates to the hearts and homes throughout the parish.

The Parishioners

A PARISH would be an empty framework if it did not have parishioners. It is our good people themselves, who, by their devotion, sacrifice and zeal, create and maintain our parishes. Because of the constant shortage of priests and nuns, almost always it is the laity who first carry the faith to a given locality; after them come the priests, the parish and the school.

In each parish, priest and people unite to offer sacrifice at the same altar, to impart the faith to children and converts, to receive the same sacraments, to obey the same laws under their bishop and the Holy Father — in a word, to help each other to be all that a Catholic should be.

Most truly does every active, fervent parish fulfill the promise of our divine Lord: "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there I am in the midst of them."

There may be some uninformed Catholics who accept no responsibility for Christ's death; but the fact is that each one of us is personally responsible for the torture inflicted upon Him.

A SENSELESS

A WELL-MEANING priest once gave to a Catholic husband and his wife as an anniversary present an excellent reproduction, beautifully framed, of a famous painting of St. Cecilia. The drawing was flawless, the composition inspired, the dress arranged in soft, free-flowing lines. But basically, the painting, having to do with the martyrdom of St. Cecilia, was the picture of a corpse.

"Sorry, but we don't want a dead woman decorating the walls of our home," said the wife.

And in that blunt fashion the gift of the picture was refused.

Supposedly the bright, red blood of martyrs is not a beautiful sight to many people. Martyrdom must mean to them nothing more than a gory, senseless and disgusting tragedy. Actually, however, if we give the matter any serious thought, the sight of Cecilia lying lifeless in a pool of her own blood must of necessity move us, like poignant music, to the very depths of our being.

Do we not believe that love is the only truly beautiful thing in the world? Why, then, should the corpse

TRAGEDY?

BERNARD F. McWILLIAMS, C.S.S.R.

of a martyr be repugnant, even though it is the body of a young girl? Is there something repugnant about loving God? Were it not for the fact that Cecilia bowed her head to the executioner, she would have simply joined a long line of pitifully loveless Roman matrons. As it was, with the shedding of her blood a love that was a long time growing reached the peak of its perfection and rapturous beauty.

There is no finer expression of love possible to the human being. "Greater love than this no man hath than he who lays down his life for his friends." (Someday when the blood banks show a better understanding of the mystic meaning of blood, they are going to be swamped with donors.) Cecilia shed her blood for the simple but splendid reason that not to do so would mean living out her life in a loveless vacuum.

If one objects to the lifeless body of Cecilia, one must be logical and object strenuously to a representation of the lifeless body of Christ upon the cross. If we overlook the fact that here we have the most moving expression of love the world has ever seen, then a crucifix must be to us nothing more than a disgusting reminder of a brutal and senseless page in human history. We would certainly be considered ghoulish if we mounted on the walls of our home a plaster reproduction of the body of Mussolini, hanging in the plaza of an Italian town like butchered meat. But why be squeamish about a crucifix on your walls? You have pictures of relatives and friends. Very often the reason is that you don't ever want to forget what these people have done for you. Do you want to forget what Christ has done for you?

Or perhaps you want to forget what you have done to Christ? Make no mistake about one thing: if a crucifix is not prominently displayed in your home because you feel it would offend any Jewish friends you might have, you are laboring under a huge misconception. If the Jewish people think that *we* think that *they* murdered our best Friend, then it is high time we told them the truth.

There may be in this world some uninformed Catholics who accept no responsibility for Christ's death: but the plain matter of fact is that each one of us is personally responsible for the sickening torture inflicted upon Him. Don't try to minimize your guilt

by saying that all humanity is responsible. If you alone among all human beings had committed but a single sin, Christ would still have shed every last drop of His blood to save you from the consequences of that sin. It behooves you never to forget that.

Many people shy away from exposing their children to the "brutality" of the cross. They think it is a terrible thing, for example, to have children sitting in a classroom all day under the shadow of Christ crucified. It certainly would be if these children were not told that the cross is the world's most beautiful love story. This story has neither beginning nor end. But let us pick it up at the garden-gate of Gethsemane. Here we find Christ bathed in a sweat of blood. A physiological impossibility, you will say. Doctors have checked men under every imaginable kind of stress and strain and have never once witnessed a bloody sweat. But no one ever has been or ever will be under the strain that Christ was under that night. Consider that it was then that He took upon Himself the guilt of the whole world, of all of us, of trillions of us.

SIN is a falling from love into lovelessness. Living with the guilt of mortal sin means living in hell because life without love is the essence of hell. The Lord, because He became guilty that night of our innumerable sins walked into the maw of a million hells. The experience would have annihilated Him ex-

cept that divine strength stayed Him up for the work He had to do.

Someone had to make a supremely perfect act of love to wipe away the hatreds of long centuries. Because He was God, He came admirably equipped for the task at hand. He was to bring love back into the world with a freshness and intensity that would never diminish. He was to atone for our sins, our lovelessness, by giving of Himself to the fullest possible degree. And His undying and boundless love was to be for us the inexhaustible fountain from which we would forever be able to drink our fill of the love we so desperately need.

Of course we know that in one sense the shedding of His blood was not necessary. He could have accomplished everything that His Father sent Him to do by just becoming man for a fraction of a second. But His Father wanted us to know two important facts. One is that sin is the most terrible thing by far that can happen to mankind. When love goes out of our lives, something truly frightening — the murder of God — must happen in order to make us aware of the danger that threatens us.

But the other fact is more important. Christ's Father wanted Him to undergo the terror of death by crucifixion, which is the art of torture's highest achievement, so that we would forever know that God's love for us has no limits, that there is nothing He won't do to convince us of His love.

As a matter of fact, although God is supremely omnipotent, although He has hurled galaxies into the heavens, although with an effortless nod He has brought millions of complex and magnificently articulated beings into existence, there remains to Him, nevertheless, not a single thing more that He can now do to prove His love for us. It is as though He had said, "Let there be no mistake about my love for my children lest, thinking of their insignificance and of My immense majesty, they would believe that I am not concerned about them. I will go the whole way. They know that suffering, and above all death, are the final and conclusive proofs of love. Let Me then suffer and die for them in a way that will leave no doubt in their minds about how much I love them." (And You knew all along, dear, good God, didn't You, that many of Your children would be ashamed of what You had done, that Your mangled body would be hideous to them.)

It started that very day.

There was to be a religious festival the next day in Jerusalem. People were beginning to flock into town from all over. Thinking that the visitors approaching the gates would be a little nauseated at the sight of three men writhing in agony on crosses, some of the town fathers went to the governor and asked to have the bodies removed. The governor, having declared one of the men completely innocent and then having turned around and condemned him to death, was happy to oblige.

Forthwith a contingent of soldiers went out to remove the bodies. They found the two thieves still breathing, so they broke their legs to bring about death. When they came to the third man, they judged him to be already dead. But one of the soldiers, to be certain, took his spear and gouged out his side where the heart is located. A little bit of blood came forth and then water, the water being a clear sign that every last drop of blood had drained from the body.

FRIEND, you will search the far corners of the globe and you will never find anyone who will go that far for you. You can look deep into the eyes of your mother or your father, your brothers or sisters, your children; deep, deep into the eyes of your dearest one and, although you will find love there, it will be but a pallid, flickering, shiftily love. There is no one who would dare to love you, who could possibly love you, with the intensity, the warmth and the unselfishness with which Christ loves you. Is it conceivable that you would want more proof?

The underprivileged child from the city slums was in the country for the first time on a vacation. Everything he beheld on the farm was new and wondrous to his pinched little face.

Toward sunset of the first day he stood intently watching the farmer's wife plucking a chicken.

After a bit his curiosity grew too great and he asked gravely:

"Do you take off their clothes every night, lady?"

POOR WITH CHRIST

Christ was born in poverty and He died in poverty. From the meanness of the stable to His death upon the cross He underwent all possible privations. He had no cradle in His infancy, no money wherewith to pay the tax, no house wherein to celebrate the Pasch, no place where He might lay His head, no grave wherein to rest. After He had referred to the commandments of God as an indispensable condition of salvation, He mentioned poverty as an essential to perfection.

Such is the poverty sought by the saints. To love poverty because it is the necessary condition of perfect charity is indeed to plunge into a state of supernatural bliss of which our unaided power can form no idea — it is to reach the full happiness made known in the Gospel and to enter here below into the kingdom of God.

Msgr. Bolo

SUCCESS FORMULA

A seventy-year-old lady, relaxed and youthful looking despite her years, gave this formula for the gracefulness of her old age:

I know how to forget disagreeable things.

I tried to master the art of saying pleasant things.

I did not expect too much of my friends.

I kept my nerves well in hand and did not allow them to bore others.

I tried to find congenial any work I had to do.

I retained the "illusions" of my youth, and didn't believe every man a liar and every woman spiteful.

FOR PARENTS OF RETARDED CHILDREN

*This is the last of a series
of four articles for par-
ents of retarded children.*

GERARD BREITENBECK, C.S.S.R.

PARENTS who face the problem of dealing with a retarded child for the first time are liable to become confused and panicky and say, "I will never be capable of handling this situation. What can I do?" This is a particularly pressing problem if the parents decide to keep the child at home instead of placing it at once in an institution.

How should the child be treated while at home?

The general answer that was received from all the parents who responded to our questionnaire was: "Treat this child as you would treat any other child."

The method to be used is persistent, repetitious training by both parents.

Mrs. Mary Ruffin gives the universal response to all these parents when she remarks: "Not having a professional education myself, I tried to teach my child some of the things

that would enable it to help itself and accomplish some of the things I would expect a normal child to do." Many of the parents elaborated on exactly what means were used and what they did.

Mr. and Mrs. William Brandt have this to say: "We took our little one wherever we went: to church, stores, vacations, and she became socially adjusted by our doing so." Mr. and Mrs. Fred Collins add: "We used such means as kindergarten games and reading to our child." Another parent states: "We helped our child to learn to count by teaching it to bounce a ball, played cards with it to teach it numbers, helped it work puzzles." Mr. and Mrs. Raymond McNamara remark: "We played simple roll-the-ball games, hide and seek, and we tried to form words for her to speak." These parents emphasized this point: more patience will be required than with a normal child.

We may summarize the thinking of these parents and say: "Don't push the little one when he or she shows interest in learning something new, whether that be learning to eat, walk, or color pictures. Just encourage the child. Patience and repetition are the most effective means of training a retarded child. He or she must be trained to behave socially and be given active participation in family activities according to his or her abilities. Don't 'molly-coddle' or pamper the child. Treat him or her as much as a normal child as possible."

SISTER Clare of St. Mary of Providence School, who, as we said before, has been dealing with retarded children for over thirty years, gave this advice to 100 pediatricians and obstetricians in a paper she read before them at Children's Memorial Hospital Clinic: "Make the child realize that it is a part of the family. Praise it if and when it makes some progress or does something commendable. Punish it if it deliberately does something wrong. Never put the child on a pedestal and make the family rotate around the child. Don't do anything for the child that he or she *can do for itself*. This will take patience, but the rewards to self and others will be tremendous. Thus it is important that these children learn to help themselves as much as they can, know how to occupy their time, learn to take their places in the home without monopolizing or demanding too much attention."

Sister Clare continues on some more of the practical points in home

training. "Teach the child to walk through musical therapy. Skating, with someone holding on to each hand, gets it used to using its feet. At the same time use a *few* unbreakable records on a record player. Preferably these records should be simple nursery rhymes. It is very important not to confuse the child through many things. A parent may be tempted to buy many things for a retarded child so as to make up for its condition. This temptation must be guarded against since repetition of the *same few* things is suited to its mentality. When many things are given they only confuse rather than teach."

As a retarded child is growing up it is often overly active, restless and at times destructive. Common sense, therefore, tells us that if the following principles are maintained a great deal of trouble and unnecessary heartaches will be avoided. The toys that are given to the child should be large and free of all sharp edges. They should be able to withstand all rough handling. These toys should be few in number and take into account the physical and mental limitations of the child. The furniture and furnishings of the home should be simple. If parents of a retarded child eliminate from the home fancy lamps that turn over, expensive bric-a-brac that breaks easily, dangling wires that are tripped over, precious tables that mar easily, many a headache and heartache will never be experienced.

No doubt many wonderful volumes have been published on this subject.

The following are books we know about. They have been used as guides for parents and others who have had the care of retarded children. The first, called "Teach Me," is put out by the Division of Public Institutions, Department of Social Security, St. Paul, Minnesota. It has thirty-one pages of practical suggestions for training the retarded child. For a nominal sum, it can be purchased by writing to the above address. For religious training and the fundamental principles of faith, Katherine Delmonico Byles has a small booklet called, "Religion in the Home." This booklet gives monthly aids for the parents of pre-school children. It is published by the Paulist Press, 401 West 59th Street, New York, 19, New York, and can be purchased from them. Msgr. J. W. Feider has compiled a special catechism for retarded children. It is called, "My Guide to Heaven," and can be obtained from St. Coletta School, Jefferson, Wisconsin.

What was considered the best age to look for a specialized school or institution to care for the retarded child? What were the reasons that made you decide to place the child in this specialized school or institution?

The solution of this question can change according to the presentation of particular circumstances. The proper solution must be sought always in the light of what seems best, all things considered, in view of the present situation and condition. The consensus of opinion, however, seems to be that the best time to look for a specialized training school for the re-

tarded child is from the age of five to eight. In particular cases this age may vary a little either way. The specialized school can be either a day or a residential school for exceptional children. How long the child is to remain in this particular specialized school will depend, also, on individual circumstances.

From the answers of parents of retarded children, two points become clear as to why they, themselves, decided to place their child in a specialized school. The first looked to the good of the child and the second concerned the inability of the parents to cope adequately with the problem when the child reached this age period.

Companionship and activities suited to his or her capabilities and also the desire of the child to go to school like any other child were motives listed by these parents. Mr. and Mrs. Otto Vlasaty of Downers Grove remark: "Her younger sister (who had been her companion) was growing away from Cathy's little world." Mr. and Mrs. Brandt add: "Judy was always seeking friendships and began running away. She always came back, but we worried that something would happen to her. So many cruel things happen to normal girls that we would never forgive ourselves if anything happened to Judy." Mr. and Mrs. Russell Elwell of Park Ridge say: "We felt she had had the love of a home and family but now was ready to be with children of her own kind." Mr. and Mrs. William Van Kirk tell us: "My wife and I saw that we could not possibly give our child the ad-

vantages equal to those given by the right kind of institution."

On the part of the parents, the reasons given were not subjective like flight from a problem, but solid objective reasons. Mrs. Josephine Piwinicki offers: "I found I could not cope with our child's struggle to do what normal children did. I found that I pitied this little one too much and could not make it do anything that was too difficult for it. I saw that this was not training the child." All parents feel that their children, at this age, should be in a school of some kind. Many normal children are sent away to boarding school for one reason or another. Some are sent because of the loss of mother or father; others are sent because of the advantages the parent wishes the child to acquire, and so on. Therefore Mrs. Shaw tells us: "Our child needed to be trained and disciplined in a way neither my husband, who is a doctor, nor I had any knowledge of. In our hearts we knew that she would be better off. Thus we sent her to a specialized school."

Sister Clare brings out a fundamental point of training. "Retarded children should be arranged in groups academically according to their mental powers. In this way the child can have stimulation to advance and see the progress of advancement in his or her group. If a child is placed with normal children there is great danger of frustration because of its lack of ability to compete."

Must the specialized schooling be of a residential and permanent type or can it be on a day school basis?

Sister Clare of St. Mary of Providence again gives us her opinions on these points: "There comes a time when formal training and education of the exceptional child must be thought of. For the educable, well-adjusted, retarded child, where family conditions permit, a special day school is the ideal solution. The child still remains a part of the family in the home, and yet he or she has associations with others like himself or herself in the school situation. Since he or she will probably become self-supporting to a degree, it seems wise to keep him or her in the home and in contact with the community and community life. For those who have no stable home life, or whose mental limitations are such that they cannot benefit by special day school, the institution is the answer."

How long should a child be kept in a specialized school?

In the book, "The Atypical Child," edited by Rev. William Jenks, C.S.S.R., we read: "The mentally retarded needs equal rights with the normal child, but the program should be fitted to his or her mental capacity. In an equal program, the handicapped often loses courage." Anna M. Engel, M.A., in the book, "Vocational Rehabilitation of the Mentally Retarded," published by the Federal Security Agency, lists the different jobs that the various degrees of retarded can do. She says: "The kind of work at which these boys and girls have been most successful is found in places where they can do repetitive operations at monotonous tasks which would be dead-

ly for people of higher mentality, but which give perfect satisfaction to them." In the light of the above principles Sister Clare's advice can be applied: "As long as the child is making progress, then keep it in school. When the trainable time has ended, then a decision must be made in the light of the child's potential. For the good of some children custodial care will be necessary. Others will be able to stay at home and do simple jobs. Others may be able to do non-hazardous jobs in industry."

The group of international experts, whom we have quoted before, under the auspices of WHO, makes this suggestion: "A point of importance is the provision of domestic and financial help to parents needing it, or during the times of sickness or holiday, so that they will be able to continue the home care when this seems the best course to take. It should be possible for a parent to place the sub-normal child temporarily in an institution, if domestic assistance cannot be obtained at the time of crisis." Again each case will have to be solved in the light of the particular circumstances.

If and when our retarded child is sent to a specialized school, what should be our attitude toward the school or institution?

Mrs. Louise Erickson, who is herself a nurse, has lined up some very practical rules that will help parents in their relationship with the school or institution. Some regimentation is a must. Wherever you have a group of individuals, good order demands

this. At first a change of diet often-times causes loss of weight. In many cases some retarded children are inclined to be overweight anyway. At first these children will become homesick. Usually they soon overcome this as they get acquainted with their companions and accustomed to their environment. Even mentally retarded children fight, get scratches, lumps, mosquito bites, etc. Do not get excited if they mention such things, or try to seek unreasonable sympathy. Normal children do this also. At times there will be differences of opinion. Even this happens in the highest type of mentality. Sister Clare adds: "Parents should not start out by trying to tell the directors of the school of their choice how to run the school. Wait until the child has been in this school for a reasonable time and then talk over any problems with the directress. Give the school a chance to use its system. Those engaged in the work have been trained."

* * *

TO GIVE birth to a mentally handicapped child is no disgrace. It merely shows that God has kept a part of the intellect of this little "saint" in heaven to await the glorious unending day of the resurrection of the body.

Besides material advantages and worldly prosperity and physical endowments there are many other gifts in life that are of a completely spiritual nature. As we saw from the answers of some of these parents, the retarded child has a way of uniting a family and helping the various

members of the family develop the virtues of patience, charity, kind consideration of others and gratitude for the gifts God has bestowed on us

personally. It is to point out these spiritual gains that we have written these articles and tried to answer the above questions.

pre-marriage clinic

Lying about Age to a Boy Friend

Donald F. Miller, C.S.S.R.

PROBLEM: I have a very wonderful boy friend, and he likes me so much that he has already begun to talk about our getting married. Even though I have wanted with all my heart to agree to this, I have held back and refused so far to talk about marriage. The reason may seem very trivial to you, but is terribly embarrassing to me. When I first met this young man, I lied about my age. I told him I was 25, when actually I am 29. What I want to know is this: Is it possible at all for me to go on concealing my right age and to marry him without his finding out? If I did that, would it make our marriage a bad one? I'm so afraid that if I tell him the truth now, he will be so disgusted with me that he will give up the idea of ever again asking me to marry him. He himself is only 27, so that makes me two years older than he is. What chance have I got?

SOLUTION: Your only chance is humbly and repentantly to face up to the sins of vanity and lying that you committed, and to come out with the whole truth in the spirit of one who has learned a good lesson from a mistake and is big enough to take the humiliation involved in admitting the lie.

Surely you should not think of trying to maintain this lie about your age through the whole process of preparing for marriage. It is hard to see how that would be

possible. Both the state that licenses marriages, and the Church that prepares you for a sacramental marriage, require baptismal and birth records that reveal your age. The Church also requires other records, such as that of your first Communion, etc., that would give you away. Except by forging records and a great deal of continued lying, it would be impossible to keep the vital statistics about your own life from the man you are marrying. Surely you have no thought of compounding the guilt of your first perhaps thoughtless lie by even attempting to make it an official record, nor of living your whole life with the horrible fear that a member of your family might reveal your secret at any time.

The situation may be not quite so black as it looks to you. The difference in your ages is quite negligible, and to the majority of men would not be a deciding factor. If this man loves you, and you have mutual interests and aspirations, and if you share the blessing of the same good, sound, true religion, the odds are heavily in your favor if you come out with the truth as soon as possible. You only keep multiplying your problems and intensifying your worries about this matter as long as you let the lie stand. The embarrassment involved in taking back the lie should be accepted as reparation, the reparation that, in one form or another, must ultimately be made for every sin.

POINTED PARAGRAPHS

Easter Bunnies and Eggs

It is difficult to trace historically just when the rabbit began to be associated with the feast of Easter. Probably the first association of the two was made by Christians, who saw, in the amazing fertility of rabbits, a reminder of the abundant new life that Christ won for all His followers by rising from death and the grave.

It is quite easy to see why, from time immemorial, eggs have been associated with the feast of Easter. An egg contains life in the tomb of a shell, even as the body of Christ was contained in His tomb. As the chick breaks his own shell and emerges into life, so Christ broke forth from His tomb to appear gloriously alive after His death on the cross.

For the life of us, however, we cannot see the sense or logic of teaching children that rabbits bring the eggs and hide them around the house on Easter. It is just as bad as teaching them the Christmas myth that Santa Claus comes down the chimney.

The de-Christianized world seems to need such myths, once it has lost knowledge and sight of the great spiritual truths behind the celebration of great feasts. Thus, looking into store windows around Easter time,

one would think that the sole purpose of the feast is to make household gods out of bunnies and eggs, and to give children the absurd notion that bunnies bring them eggs on Easter.

Christian parents should, by all means, explain, in whatever fashion a child's mind can absorb, the symbolic relationship between eggs and bunnies and the resurrection of Christ. It might even be an opportunity for planting in the small child's mind a few preliminary notions about the origins of life, or, as they are popularly called, the facts of life.

But the child should never be permitted to forget or overlook the tremendous historical fact that provides us with the feast of Easter. Christ rose from the dead; He thereby gave eternal life to all human beings; He is the origin of all life in the world.

Raw Sex

The Ladies Home Journal recently carried a very frank article on the subject of girls and young women who "get into trouble," that is, who become pregnant outside of marriage. The article was written by Dr. Goodrich C. Schauffler, a noted obstetrician of many years' practice, and was not only frank, but deeply sympathetic in a good Christian sense,

and bold in its appraisal of the factors that lead girls "into trouble."

He points out two things as almost equally responsible for the moral breakdown of girls in the form of excursions into unchastity.

The first of the two things is the fact "that youngsters who were once sheltered and disciplined are now allowed an exposure to and experience of the seamy side of sex formerly limited to older groups and depraved settings."

Those older people who have been trapped by secularistic liberals into thinking that censorship, of any kind, is the worst word in the dictionary, should do some heavy thinking about this statement of Dr. Schauffler:

"Children today are subject to sex in its rawest forms before they have the faintest concept of its total meaning in life, and we adults furnish the example. We have only to look about us to realize that, as a nation, we are preoccupied — almost obsessed — with the superficial aspects of sex; you might say, with sex as a form of amusement. . . . We find this unrealistic sex in movies, in magazine illustrations, in advertisements; we hear it over the radio and see it on television; it is splashed on the covers of paper-backed books and through the comic magazines."

By actual case histories the doctor shows how this torrent of sex incentives washes away at times the moral restraints of youngsters and plunges them into sins that they are to regret for the remainder of their lives.

The second important factor in the making of unwed mothers is unhappy family background. It is from homes that are filled with selfishness, bickering, quarrelling, unhappiness, that many girls seek escape, looking for what they have never received in their own homes — love. It is all too easy for them to make the mistake of confusing love with sex-indulgence, often with tragic consequences.

Dr. Schauffler is not easy on the predatory young men who think it smart to lead young girls into sin. But they, too, he admits, are subject to the above influences, and society must take a large share of the blame for making them what they are.

Just as America, under the spur of Russian achievements in scientific exploration, is beginning to face boldly the weaknesses in its educational system, so too should America begin to face up to the moral corruption that is a result of its constant parading of sex, as a form of amusement, before its youngsters.

The best educational system in the world — if ever we can boast of having that — will not save a nation of moral weaklings.

Soul-Searching in Education

To Sputnik goes the credit for a great awakening in educational circles in the United States. The baby moon, product of amazing scientific research and progress in Russia, has produced a flood of lamentations from American leaders over the manner in which Americans have, for over a generation, been hoodwinked and hornswoggled by a system of education that is really no true education at all.

Professor Arthur Bestor, of the University of Illinois, gives a typical expression to the general lamentation in a long interview published by *U. S. News and World Report*. Every parent, indeed every American, should ponder deeply his indictments of the system under which most American children have been educated over the past 30 years.

Professor Bestor is rather easy on the originators of so-called "progressive education," saying that it was not their contention that education should get so far off the track as it has. We ourselves believe that practically all the weaknesses of the American educational system may be traced right back to the philosophy of John Dewey, who was revered in his teaching and writing days as a major prophet in most of the academic circles of the land.

These are some of Professor Bestor's specific charges:

1. The "life adjustment" theory of education (which, by the way is a neat thumbnail description of John Dewey's philosophy), has led to a fatal neglect of the task of teaching children; a) to think, b) what to think about. A favorite slogan of the "life adjustment" educators is this: "We don't teach the subject; we teach the child." The result has been an anti-intellectualism that has deprived children of a knowledge of even the most elementary things that an educated person should know.

2. The "life-adjustment" theory of education has led schools to provide soft and often nonsensical courses

to fill out the time of a child at school. Moreover children (or their parents) have been permitted to choose these soft courses, in place of the taxing discipline required for attaining a foundation of real learning.

3. Teachers have been overwhelmed with courses on "how to teach," but rarely required to know thoroughly subjects they were supposed to teach.

4. Somewhere along the line it was decided that it would be undemocratic to single out and give special attention to students of unusual talent. The result has been that the talented have been held down to the level of the untalented all along the line.

Look at the contrast in the results of education in Russia and education in the U.S., and you will see why America has reason for lamentation:

In Russia, a graduate of a high school has completed 5 years of physics, 4 years of chemistry, 1 year of astronomy, 5 years of biology, 10 years of mathematics through trigonometry, 5 years of at least one foreign language.

Is there one high school graduate in America who has had what all Russian graduates have had?

It's high time that the sewing and knitting classes, the barn - dancing classes, the boy - girl - relationship classes, etc., be thrown out and we get down to education.

Grandma had to bake and fry all day over a wood-burning stove to get the compliments that her granddaughter gets today after thirty minutes of thawing things out.

LIGUORIANA

ON OATHS

By St. Alphonsus
Selected and Edited by
John P. Schaefer, C.S.S.R.

AN OATH is the tacit or express invocation of God, calling Him to witness to the truth of something. And since God is the first and infallible truth, such an invocation implies that the swearer wishes God to manifest as true and as known by Himself that to which he swears. God's verification, of course, is left to His good pleasure — whether it be in this life or in the next.

Essentially, therefore, an oath is not dependent upon the use of a set formula of words. It may be made by one who merely has the internal intention of invoking God as a witness, whether this be by the use of words or signs, or without the use of either. It is the intention of calling God to witness which constitutes an oath. Hence one may truly take an oath even though he employs words which in no way signify an oath.

That an oath may be recognized, or that it may be correctly demanded in court, we make the following explanation of different formulas. For it is obvious that a doubt may frequently arise as to the intention of one who takes an oath, and that a judgment can be formed only accord-

ing to the common acceptance of words.

The following phrases contain the essential elements of an oath: "I call God to witness," "I invoke God as a witness," "I swear," "I make an oath," "I add my oath." Such expressions are obviously oaths unless the one who employs them makes it evident in some other manner that he does not intend an oath. It may, for instance, be clear that he is not speaking seriously or that he is overwhelmed by anger.

Such expressions as: "God knows," "God will reveal in His own time," "God is my witness," "God knows all things," "God sees my conscience," are considered to be spoken narratively, not invocatively. Hence, they are not oaths, unless, of course, it is evident from other circumstances that they are intended as such.

Words of solemn promise, or such as are spoken as a matter of special emphasis, are not necessarily oaths. Examples of this would be such expressions as: "I cross my heart," "Let my fingers or hands be cut off, if this is not true."

It would, however, be an oath to say: "By the Catholic faith," "By the holy Gospels." For the use of such

words is the implicit invocation of the Author of that faith and of the Gospels.

When expressions such as, "by my conscience," "upon my conscience," "in conscience," are employed, one is not ordinarily considered to be taking an oath. For no one is being called to witness to the truth of such statements. Their meaning is this: "What I say is what my conscience dictates."

Even to say: "I swear that this is so," is not properly speaking an oath. For this is neither an implicit nor an explicit calling upon God to witness to the truth of a statement. It is a true oath, however, if an interrogation concerning swearing precedes these words, such as is required of witnesses at a trial. In such a case, the preceding interrogation sufficiently determines one's "I swear," to be a true oath.

OTHER expressions, such as: "This is as true as the fact that the sun is shining, that I am speaking, that I am sitting here," are not oaths. For even though the comparison be false, it would only be a lie and not a false oath. For no one is invoked as a witness. Under the same classification fall such sayings as: "What I say is Gospel-truth," "This is a matter of faith," and so forth. And even to say such a thing as: "This is as true as the Gospels," would not normally be considered an oath. For such words would but connote a comparison and not an invocation.

In this same manner are to be judged other comparisons: "This is

as true as the fact that God exists, that Christ is present in the Blessed Sacrament, that the Gospel is true;" or, "I am as innocent as the Blessed Virgin or St. Francis." For while such expressions seem to mingle an oath with blasphemy, this intention is not sufficiently apparent. For, again, no one is called to witness.

Neither are these expressions blasphemous if the intention of the speaker is but to signify a likeness. They would be blasphemous only if they intended to confer upon the speaker's words a certitude equal to that of the true faith. And this is not the evident meaning of the phrase.

It is not an oath when one swears by creatures in whom there is no special manifestation of the divine goodness. For then they are not referred to specifically in their relationship to God. As, for instance, when one says: "I swear by my beard, or by my coat."

IT WOULD, however, be considered an oath were one to swear by the more noble creatures of God. For their Creator is considered to be residing in them especially. For instance, should one say that he swears by "the heavens," it is understood that he swears by Him Who dwells there; or "by the sacrament," it is understood that He swears by Him Who instituted it; "by the cross," it is understood that he swears by Him Who was affixed to it, and so forth.

In a future article we will consider different types of oaths, and special difficulties and problems connected with them.



BOOK REVIEWS

Thomas Tobin, C.S.S.R.

We recommend that books listed or reviewed in THE LIGUORIAN be purchased at your local bookstore. If you cannot obtain the book in that way, you may write to THE LIGUORIAN for further information.

A Christian Philosophy of Life Bernard Wuellner, S.J.

The author defines a philosophy of life as "a reasoned understanding of the meaning and worth of human life in both its personal and social aspects." He continues to explain this idea. "It must be man's own intellectual discovery of the origin, nature, and destiny of human life, of its value, and of man's principal relationships as a living being to other things, whether these be divine, human, or even non-living."

Father Wuellner draws together the pertinent teachings of the different branches of philosophy in order to furnish an intelligent and integrated view of human life. In various places he does supplement the philosophical presentation with the contribution of theology, especially by the example of Christ as the perfect model of the perfectly integrated person. An excellent philosophy of life for the thinking person.

(Herder, \$4.25)

My Sunday Reading Kevin O'Sullivan, O.F.M.

The subtitle explains the nature of this book: **A popular explanation and application of the Sunday Epistles and Gospels.** To each Sunday of the year the author devotes between four or five pages with text of the Epistle and Gospel, literal commentary on the text, and practical application to Christian living. The commentary gives a living meaning to the Sacred Scriptures and the applications are drawn from the text. The author's comprehensive understanding of the sacred text is evidenced by clear explanations. An excellent book to help the reader have a better knowledge of the Sunday Mass.

(Bruce, \$5.00)

Conferences on the Religious Life

Rev. Aloysius Biskupek, S.V.D.

The zealous pen of the late Father Biskupek sent forth a stream of works from the solitude of his office as chaplain to contemplative sisters. The present work grew from the many conferences he was called on to give during the course of an active life as preacher to religious. Thirty-five conferences touch on the most important aspect of the life of a religious: vows, rules, community life and the various means of attaining perfection. Good solid doctrine.

(Bruce, \$3.50)

Our Saviour's Last Night and Day

Rev. A. Biskupek, S.V.D.

A historical account of the events in the passion of Christ.

(Bruce, \$1.00)

Pope Pius XII and Catholic Education

Edited by Vincent A. Yzermans

A selection of twenty-one addresses from the more than eighty pronouncements by Pope Pius XII on Catholic education. Topics treated cover a wide range: teaching method, purposes of education, role of educator, sports, adult education, science and religious education. In the preface Father Yzermans analyzes the pope's contribution to the theory of Catholic education.

(Grail Publications, \$1.00)

You

Rev. M. Raymond, O.C.S.O.

From the Trappist monastery at Gethsemane the voice of Father Raymond is heard again. He is so captivated by the value of the individual person as a member of the Mystical Body of Christ that he must share his convictions with others. You is the story of what a person really is. Perhaps a good idea of the nature of the book can be gathered from some of the chapter headings: **You Are One Sent by God. One Christ Raised From the Dead. One Who Breathes by the God Who Burns. One Who Can Think the Thoughts of God. One Who Can Stand As Straight as Christ. One Whose Real Name Is Known to God Alone. One Born of a Mother Who Is All-Powerful.**

This is a total philosophy and way of life for the Christian. Father Raymond manifests here his usual theological depths, fertile imagination and graphic style. A "must" book for the Christian who wants to know who he is.

(Bruce, \$4.50)

Giants of the Faith

John A. O'Brien

Father John A. O'Brien, who is the foremost authority in the United States on the theory and practice of converting, has written accounts of six "conversions which changed the world." St. Paul, St. Augustine, Cardinal Newman, G. K. Chesterton, Orestes Brownson and Isaac Hecker are the six men whose conversion brought lasting effects to their contemporaries and their descendants. American readers will, perhaps, be more familiar with the other persons than they are with their own fellow citizens, Brownson and Hecker. Father O'Brien's latest work measures up to the high quality of his other works. As a Redemptorist, this reviewer congratulates him on his fairness in handling the delicate matter of Father Hecker and his relations with his former confreres, the Redemptorists.

(Hanover House, \$3.75)

Reflections on the Passion

Charles Hugo Doyle

Short reflections on the sufferings of Christ with practical resolutions for one's life. Arranged for every day of Lent.

(Bruce, \$1.85)

Mercy Is Forever

Rev. Theodore Zarenba, O.F.M.

Account of the revelations made to Sister Faustina on devotion to the mercy of God. Interesting devotion. Lack of organization of the text and awkward phrasing lessen the value.

(Franciscan Publishers, \$2.00)

A. H. PARR'S APOSTOLATE

A Million Lives at Stake; The Hallowed Hour; The Hurricane Hurler; Enchanted Daze; The Mountains Moved.

(.75 ea. paper cover.)

Mr. A. H. Parr, a business man turned writer and lecturer, is devoting his time and talents to the cause of Catholic action. His principal work is in the writing of decent novels on a variety of topics. **A Million Lives at Stake** is a modern mystery story that features hydrogen bombs, dope rings, Communists and other ingredients that cook up into a thriller-diller of a story. **The Hurricane Hurler** is a ball player's story; **The Hallowed Hour** is a romantic story; **The Mountains Moved** is a western; **The Enchanted Daze** is a memoir of his Kansas boyhood. Mr. Parr's zeal is admirable and his stories are enjoyable.

(Dove Publications)

Fulfillment

Religious of the Cenacle

This is a book of religious verse by the Cenacle Religious. Liturgical in theme and inspiration these charming verses reveal the religious fervor and the poetic skill of the religious. Good modern religious verse.

(J. S. Paluch, \$3.00)

Cork Hill Cathedral

Rev. Edward C. Greer

Father Edward C. Greer, one of the priests of the Davenport cathedral, has written the history of the parish as a record of its first 100 years. The spiritual and temporal highlights of the parish furnish interesting reading of the early days of the Church in Davenport.

(Sacred Heart Cathedral, \$3.00, paper)

Mosaic of a Bishop

John T. McNicholas, O.P.

Introduction by Most Rev. Karl J. Alter, D.D.

Edited by Rev. Maurice E. Reardon, S.T.D.

The precious stones of this mosaic were quarried by one of the keenest minds to grace the hierarchy of the United States. Most Reverend John T. McNicholas was Archbishop of Cincinnati for twenty-five years until his death in 1950. His speeches have been edited into a mosaic by Rev. Maurice E. Reardon who served as his secretary during the last years of his life. The 27 chapters present Archbishop McNicholas' statements on a wide variety of the problems that confronted the Church in her everyday life. The selection is well made and the editor's comments do serve to form a unified mosaic of the personality and work of a great American churchman.

In the words of Archbishop Karl J. Alter, his successor in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, "The reading of this book, we feel, will be a rich and rewarding experience, like an afternoon spent in the company of the late Archbishop. The Archbishop comes to life again as a defender of the faith, a devoted son of the Holy See, a militant yet humble bishop, a religious cherishing the ideals of St. Dominic and St. Francis of Assisi, a keen analyst and prudent evaluator of the character and work of his fellow bishops and priests, a national figure in the fields of education, apologetics, and social and racial justice."

This well-edited work will keep alive the echo of his voice, something which was so much desired by Archbishop McNicholas in order that his words and works would continue to save souls.

(Archdiocese of Cincinnati, \$6.00)

LUCID INTERVALS

Customer: "I haven't come to any ham in this sandwich yet."

Waiter: "Try another bite."

Customer (taking huge mouthful): "Nope, none yet."

Waiter: "Hmmm! You must have gone right past it."

Catholic Boy

Writer: "I have taken up story writing as a career."

Friend: "Sold anything yet?"

Writer: "My watch, saxophone, and overcoat."

Neighbor: "Where is your brother, Freddie?"

Freddie: "In the house playing a duet. I finished first."

"Is your husband in?" queried the man at the door.

"Yes."

"That's good. He owes me some money. I'm in luck."

"You're an optimist. If he had any money, he wouldn't be in."

Sign over the tomatoes in a grocery store:

"Madam, please do not squeeze me until I am yours."



Sign on a farm:

"Notice to hunters: Don't shoot anything that isn't moving. It may be my hired man." — *Irish Digest*

And finally, this sign in a Milwaukee coffee shop:

"You want credit, I no give, you get sore.

You want credit, I give, you no pay, I get sore.

Better you get sore."

A college student in a moment of inspiration wrote the following note home:

"Dear Dad: Gue\$\$ what I need mo\$t of all. That\$ right. \$end it along. Be\$ wi\$he\$. Your \$on, \$tephen."

But dear old dad was not to be outdone. He wrote back:

"Dear Stephen: NOthing ever happens here. We kNOW you like your school. Write us aNOther letter. NOW I have to say goodbye. Your Dad."



VERSE
AND
WORSE



Mannish maiden, shorn and grim
Why pretend to be a him,
Better far to fate defer,
Bloom and smile and be a her.

London Universe

Definition of *gents*:
Men who have sense.

FILE 13

When you're pushing 60 that's exercise enough.

Alarm clock: device used to wake people who don't hear children.

Speak in anger and you'll make the best speech you'll ever regret.

BEST SELLERS

A Moral Evaluation of Current Books, Published at the University of Scranton, Pa.

MOST POPULAR

(Not necessarily approved. Roman numeral indicates a moral rating according to categories used in general list.)

- By Love Possessed (IIb)—*Cozzens*
 Rally Round the Flag Boys (III)—*Shulman*
 Below the Salt (IIa)—*Costain*
 Atlas Shrugged (III)—*Rand*
 On the Beach (IIa)—*Shute*
 Sound of Thunder (IIa)—*Caldwell*
 Remember Me to God (IV)—*Kaufmann*
 The World of Suzie Wong (III)—*Mason*
 The Edge of Darkness (IIa)—*Chase*
 Last Tales (I)—*Dinesen*
 Thomasina (IIa)—*Gallico*

I. Suitable for general reading:

- She Wouldn't Say Who—*Ames*
 Fatal Harvest—*Amos*
 The Fabric of Memory—*Belmont*
 Into Thin Air—*Carmichael*
 Understanding China—*Cressy*
 Angels Under Wraps—*Dailey*
 The Bachelor's Baby—*Davenport*
 Mercy Unto Thousands—*Degnan*
 Her Name Is Mercy—*Del Rey*
 A Family Affair—*Eddy*
 Till I End My Song—*Gibblings*
 For Future Doctors—*Gregg*
 The Movies—*Griffith & Mayer*
 The Warblers of North America—*Griscom & Sprunt*
 Back to the Wall—*Hansen*
 And the Price is Right—*Harriman*
 Knights of Christ—*Homan*
 South by Java Head—*MacLean*
 Branch Rickey—*Mann*
 Wings for Life—*Nichols*
 You—*Raymond*
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 Where Is Jenny Now?—*Wees*

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 Dali on Modern Art—*Dali*
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 Best American Short Stories: 1957—*Foley*
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 The Case of the Daring Decoy—*Gardner*
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